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homestead high school
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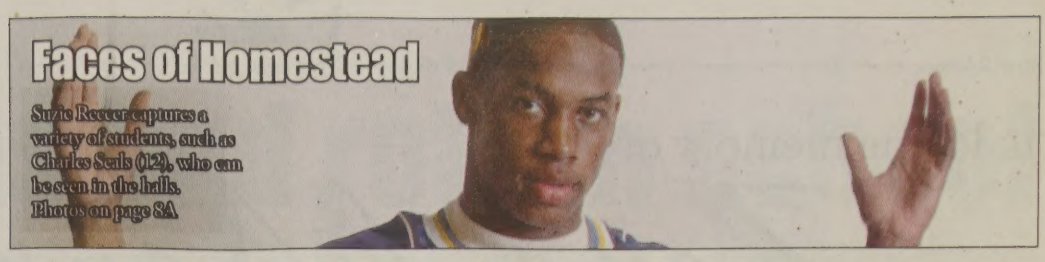
the Spartana


Faces of Homestead
Suzie Reecer captures a variety of students, such as Charles Seals (12), who can be seen in the halls.
Photos on page 8A

Friday, September 7, 2007

in loving memory of

Zena Mourtada

1989-2007

As the rising sun cast an orange glow upon the Styrofoam memorials arranged within the chain link fence, students piled into the parking lots with varying degrees of knowledge about the tragic events of the previous day. August 27 is a date that had already been immortalized in the minds of many as the day when the sun began to shine a little less brightly, colors lost their brilliance, and the radiance of one face was desperately missed.

Others, who had arrived with limited or no knowledge of the untimely death of a student, soon were confronted with the painful truth.

The events of the fateful afternoon two weeks ago are a reminder that Homestead is lucky enough to be blessed with a mixture of styles and personalities. Some students are not always known by everyone, but even these students are loved dearly by the privileged individuals who do know them. However, some of our classmates rise from the rest. Zena A. Mourtada was one of these few cherished souls: she was kind, loving, and lively.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOURTADA FAMILY

On the seemingly perfect Monday, the red Volvo belonging to Zena was struck by another vehicle, killing not just a student, but a friend and a relative that will be missed by many. However, neither the debris at the scene of the accident, nor the sight of friends and family mourning at the memorial service is the image that is left in people's heads. Zena was, and will be continued to be, known for one thing: the most cheerful and beautiful of smiles.

"She always had a smile on her face – her smile could make anyone smile, and it would just make your day so much better," Kaylee Wunderlin (12) said. "She could always make any situation into a good one, or at least look at it in a positive way."

Just three days after her 18 birthday, Zena was pronounced dead at the scene of a tragic automobile accident at the intersection of Hadley Road and Bass Road. Homestead and the surrounding community were saddened by the news. Suddenly without a wonderful sister, a best friend, and a loved daughter, many were stunned.

The group of best friends that were together to celebrate Zena's life on her 18th birthday congregated only a few short days later due to the tragic turn of events. They met again, this time with red rimmed eyes and aching hearts, to mourn their friend's passing and to share memories. They found themselves recounting tales of adventure, comedic moments, and everyday interactions.

The assortment of teary-eyed teens had begun the tumultuous journey of sorting out a world without the one person they could depend on day in and day out for a generous smile, a simple act of kindness, a willing hand to hold, a shoulder to lean on, and an ear to listen.

"Zena was one of the smartest people that I knew, she would always help me with my homework," Osmaan Syed (12) said. "Even though it was hopeless, she still never gave up."

Zena was involved in the award-winning Spartan Alliance Band her freshman, sophomore, and junior years, but gave it up this year in order to get a head start on her academic career. She participated in the higher education program offered through IPFW to earn college credits.

"Zena was a kind-hearted young lady who led by example. She was an outstanding student with a great work ethic. She was bright, reliable, and always concerned about others," Steve Barber, Band Director, said. "I was always impressed by how thoughtful and caring she was."

The studious, yet consistently cheerful, senior had plans to attend the University of Michigan and study optometry, and then take on the challenge of medical school.

"She was a very applied student, very driven. She was always present, always had a smile, and it seemed like she was friends with everybody. She was patient and willing to help others," her teacher, Toiyonna Arias, said.

These study habits perfectly embody the person Zena was, one who always had a smile on her face and defined selflessness.

"[She was] always there for me and had my back," Arezoo Nazari (11) said. "Not only did I lose a friend, but also a sister. She will be missed and is still very much loved."

Zena is survived by her mother, Sakina, as well as a brother, Adam (10), and a sister, Dania (9).

Barber added, "Zena will be greatly missed by band students, staff, and directors."

The rest of the community shares the sentiment.

"There are no words to say how amazing she was. She touched so many people's lives and helped everyone that she could," Sarah Armstrong (12) said. "Zena will never be forgotten."

New principal speaks on rule adaptations

Rick Smith gives reasoning behind school wide changes

By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

Closed lunches, added lines, a senior lounge, no backroom, and an absence of golf team moms passing out candy; somehow the cafeteria just seems different from last year. The changes continue with the addition of two student deans, a new cell phone policy, a consistent grading scale throughout the school, and even a half hour time shift that affects school dances. The biggest question on student minds: why?

The most noticeable change affecting students this year is the revamped cafeteria which has adopted a closed lunch system in which students are not allowed to exit the lunchroom once they have entered the doors. A closed lunch allows monitors that once watched the hallways to concentrate within the cafeteria to help deal with possible problems that might occur.

"Kids didn't pick up their trash, and [they] would wander into the hallways if we didn't have a monitor there," Rick Smith, principal said. "A lunch has around 700 students. You get that number of kids in one place and it's not that were expecting something to go wrong, but to manage the environment it just takes more man power, to watch things and oversee things."

Many students feel strongly about the issue. "For what has happened in the past I see no issue to revoke student rights," Andy Sterneman (12) said.

"There was never really a problem that I saw last year, if anything there is more of an issue now with all of the congestion," Rachel German (12) said.

In a suburban school that has been nationally ranked for security, how important are additional safety precautions?

"Even with our efforts, we still have a lot of potential security breeches," Smith said as he commented on the minimal effort it takes to enter the school. "Columbine didn't have any security problems until that happened."

"I think that regardless of the amount of security measures you put into a school, if someone wants to cause harm to others they will be able to pull it off," Brandon Saalfrank (12) said. "To be perfectly honest, I think we're taking things a touch too far and are going in the wrong direction."

"We don't want it to be a prison; we don't want it to be a police state, that's not why we would be doing it. But by the same token we want to know that we have a secure enough system that when you guys come to school here you parents can feel like you're going to be safe when you are here," Smith said.

Students can expect additional security measures as budget allows and the administration sees fit.

Due to the inability of students leaving the lunch room because of the closed lunch system and other issues, the Student Government-ran backroom, which previously sold candy, snacks, and school organized tee shirts, was shut down. With confusion in the actual profits made by student council, the fate of the backroom is still in question. (See Back Room Story)

"I don't know what their actual revenue was," Smith said. "I just know that the lunch room in general was an issue and we felt that that was the most important thing."

Changes continue to occur within the lunch room. With an ever-growing student body, the cafeteria has added additional lunch lines and expanded seating to what some call "the senior lounge." Both changes have received mixed reviews. According to Smith, the basis for change is the safety of the students.

"The new lunch lines are perfectly adequate," German (12) said. "However, they didn't really fix the crowding all that much and the 'senior lounge' wasn't much of a hit among students."

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Unlike previous years, a late entrance into lunch can result in truancy if the person in question is deliberately abusing the situation.

"If a student is supposed to be at lunch during their lunch mod and they are out in the building roaming they are truant, technically," Smith said. "A lot of it comes down to how the students are treating the situation."

Another change in the lunchroom is the absence of visiting parents that once passed out snacks or small trinkets to students the afternoon before an extracurricular activity or game.

"[E]veryone I talked to, adult-wise, really had a problem with [extracurricular snacks]," Smith said. "It became used so much and they were taking up tables and spaces that we now need for people to sit at. My understanding is that they would set up tables and utilize tables that we need for kids to sit at." Smith also received complaints from parents who felt they were obligated to bring in snacks so often that it was becoming a burden.

"All we can do is plan for the worst, and hope for the best." Smith said.

BRIEFS

UNIFORM GRADING SCALE

The grading scale has been altered this year in an attempt to unify grades for all classes in every department. Grades are still based on achievement in class, on tests and on daily assignments. Attendance is also a consideration in factoring grades. Grades will continue to be calculated on a semester basis composed of two nine-week grading periods and a final.

LUNCH SNACKS BANNED

Athletic and extracurricular snacks are no longer permitted to be distributed in the lunchroom. The primary reason for eliminating the snacks at lunch is the crowding issue in the cafeteria, as well as the need for the table space for students to eat. The elimination of snacks at lunch also coincides with the new closed lunch policy.

DANCE TIMES CHANGED

For the 2007-2008 school years, dance times have been altered. The dances will now start at 7:30 p.m. and conclude at 11:30 p.m. this change from previous years where dances started at 8p.m. and ended at 12p.m.

FINALS SET BEFORE BREAK

Finals have been set to be taken December 19, 20, and 21, before winter break. The last day of finals will end with an early dismissal at 10:50 a.m. Winter break this year falls from December 24 to January 7.

SCHOOL PICTURE RETAKES

School picture retakes by Lifetouch will be on Wednesday, September 26. Appointments must be made with Mr. Kuhn in room 620 to sign up.

NEW ELECTRONICS POLICY

The disciplinary procedure regarding cell phones has changed for the 2007-2008 school year. The use of cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices is not permitted during the school day from 7:50 a.m. to 2:35 p.m. They are also prohibited to be used on the school bus. Cell phones must remain off and out of sight or else staff members have the right to take the device away. The first time a student is caught or suspected of using an electronic device they will receive a warning and the used device will need to be picked up by a parent in the office. The second time a student is caught they will receive a one day Saturday school, and their parents will need to pick up the used device in the office. The third offense is dealt an In-school suspension (ISS) and the parent will need to pick up the electronic device in the office.

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making a difference
Recycle your copy of The Spartana when you are done reading it or you can use it to wrap gifts for others.

in loving memory of

Zena Mourtada

1989 - 2007

Time ticked by,
Life went on,
And there you were
Always standing strong.

A friendly face
And a beautiful soul,
You wouldn't stop
Until you reached your goal.

Never selfish,
Never rude,
People loved you
For your positive attitude.

"Life is music,"
You used to say,
But just your smile
Could brighten the darkest day.

As you pass on,
And leave this world forever,
We must move on,
But we won't forget you. Never.

The sun will still shine
Even though we're apart.
Just always know,
You're eternally in our hearts.

-Anonymous

"If you did not know Zena you missed out on knowing truly the nicest, sweetest, most sincere person. On the outside you could see her physical beauty, and once you got to know her she was *equally beautiful* on the inside. I am blessed to of had you in my life. I am happy we became so close. My heart goes out to you forever. You will be missed by everyone." - Joseph Rubalcada

"I know you're looking down on us with binoculars and I hope you're seeing all the love you left here. You really shouldn't even have to look because you should have known. You were too young and way too smart and gifted for you to be taken away. *The world needs more people like you*, it really does." - Stephanie Spencer

"You were an amazing friend, I could tell you anything and you always had the best advice. I love you Zena, no one will ever be able to replace you." - Katie Savage

"I just miss you so much and I'm thinking about all the fun times and memories we had together. I don't think I ever told you, but **the world needs more Zena Mourtadas**. It really does. I'm thinking of you all the time." - Sarah Boeckmann

"When you looked at somebody you always looked at them with a smile. I don't remember ever looking at you when you weren't smiling... There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that you have changed every single person who has ever talked to you. You have no idea how many people love you, Zena." - Diana Petrova

"My habibi, I don't think that you will ever realize how you and your kind words have affected so many people. I can't believe how this could happen to such an amazing person but I will just have to accept the fact that it happened for a reason. ***Allahfiz***,"- Osmaan Syed

"There are no words to really say about how you were so amazing. You touched so many people's lives and helped everyone that you could. Zena, you have showed me that no matter what is going on in my life, I should always look on the brighter side of everything. You made other girls mad because you were what every girl wanted to be in the world. Thank you for making me a better person and touching my life." - Sarah Armstrong

"18 years and 3 days wasn't enough... Love always." - Kaylee Wunderlin

"You were so nice, beautiful, smart, caring, and so much more. *The world is a better place because of you.*" - Danielle Fry

"I know that you are safe and happy where you are. Not only did I lose a friend, but even a sister. You were always there for me and had my back.. You will be missed and are still very much loved!" - Arezoo Nazari

"Zena was like the sister I never had, I could tell her anything. I loved her so much. I will always remember her and **her cute shy giggle**. She will be truly missed." - Amy Khemka

"Whether we were arguing about who was prettier (you), or planning our "arabic" parties, we were having fun. You watched over us here, and you are now. I'm happy that you're happy with your daddy, though I will miss you intensely. I want to thank you for being the best friend anyone could be. You added to all our lives greatly and you deserve to be happy. You are my hero. 'Amoorah w helwa w katkootah D Habibti, agmal Zenoonah!'" - Hana Hawash

"Zena (*Our Guardian Angel*),
I have always looked up to you because you set a great example. You're in my heart forever." - Abby McCarville

"To the best friend I'll ever have,

You were the most ***caring*** and ***selfless*** person I knew. You had such a bright future ahead of you. But I know you're in a better place now, and you are with your dad, who you missed so much. I know you will be looking down on us, and be there for us all somehow, like you have always been. I'll miss you always." Love, Jessica McCarville

"It was a blessing be able to ever meet you." -Kristina Sheedy

"I always pictured her when she was older to be married and have kids and she would be the amazingly beautiful woman with the great job and the perfect life we all would be jealous of. She is still with us in spirit and will always be in our hearts." Love, Lauren Farmer

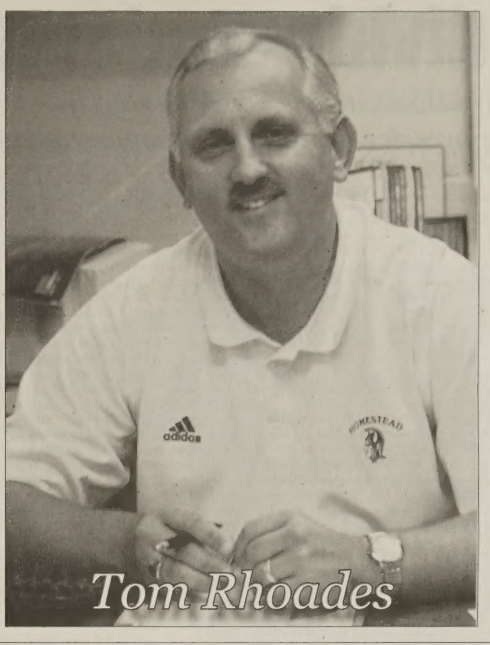
"Zena Mourtada was like a best friend to me and the best sister I could have ever asked for. There wills never be any words to describe how much we loved each other. It just showed. I honestly think no one will ever be as great as a person as she was. She made up most of my world and holds a piece of my heart forever.

I love you, Zena.

You'll definitely be missed."
Dania Mourtada.

New deans find role in school

Rhoades, Kintz adjust to new titles as Deans of Students, Assistant Athletic Directors



Tom Rhoades

"Homestead has great young people. I'm a member of the community, I have a son here too, and it's a great place to go to school."

Tom Rhoades
Dean of Students and Assistant to Athletic Director

By Ashley Heath
Writer

Specific Job: Disciplinarian for junior and senior classes

Issues you think you'll be dealing with: Discipline issues, supervision in the hallways, security at the games

Spartana: How do you plan to personally impact Homestead?

Rhoades: I hope to bring another perspective to students who have questions about careers and issues outside of school. [I want] to be someone who can talk to young people especially [those] who are maybe not understanding how important it is to work hard, get good grades and do their best. I really just want to be another resource for students.

Spartana: What lessons are you bringing from your previous jobs?

Rhoades: I'm sure there will be. We're going to have occasional altercations or fights and that's human nature. When you have this many people in a facility like this you're going to have that, that's life.

Spartana: What observations have you made about the student body?

Rhoades: Homestead has great young people. I'm a member of the community, I have a son here too, and it's a great place to go to school. Police officers deal with a very small percent of the population. If [they] aren't careful they can start to believe that all of the population is like the criminals. Same way with schools, 1 or 2 percent may intentionally be causing problems. The rest, we're all like. We all make mistakes.

Spartana: What are your main goals for the upcoming school year?

Rhoades: I want to make sure we are doing everything we can to make sure this school is safe and secure because we owe it to the students, the staff, and the parents. When I send my kids to school I want to know that they're safe, that we are doing everything possible and if we're not then it's our fault.

Spartana: How will you achieve those goals?

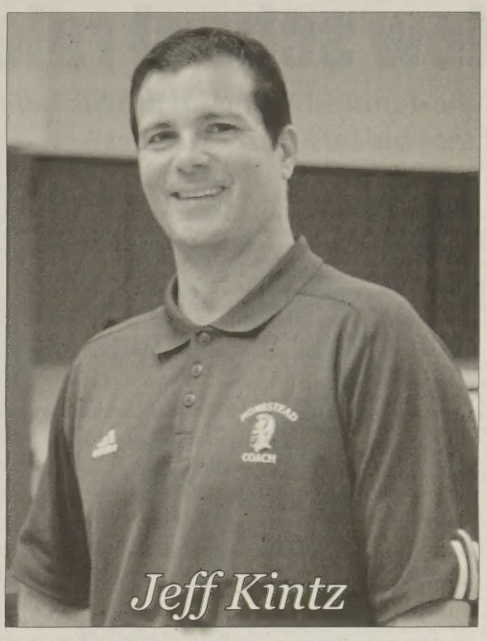
Rhoades: One thing I've noticed is [that] this is a very open building. If people none of us know can get in here without anyone stopping them, that's a concern. I think we need security [but] a lot of people don't want to be bothered by it. When I would go to neighborhoods and do crime prevention talks, nobody would show up, but once they started getting their house broken into, then everyone shows up. There is always someone out there that wants to hurt us. [We are] in the age now that we're dealing with terrorism. I have seen the al Qaeda training tapes that were taken out of the caves. They would build mock school buildings to target and practice with the hopes of bringing their tactics to the United States. So there are all kinds of reasons why we need to make our school safe and not just allow anyone to walk in.

Spartana: What is the biggest surprise you've come across?

Rhoades: The biggest surprise has been how easily I've transitioned to this job. I'm handling discipline which sometimes is negative, but the whole environment is so much more positive. Instead of arresting kids, I'd rather work with kids, help them avoid that.

Spartana: Do you have any last words?

Rhoades: I really am very open and people [can] come to me with any issue. Consequences will be handed out, but I don't keep a list. We'll deal with things as they come. Students need to just relax, enjoy themselves, follow the rules, and have a good year.



Jeff Kintz

"I think my main goal here being in the 9th grade academy is to make sure that the freshman class goes on to be successful."

Jeff Kintz
Dean of Students and Assistant to Athletic Director

By Katherine DeRosa
News Editor

Specific Job: Disciplinarian for freshmen and sophomore classes

Issues you think you'll be dealing with: Discipline issues, supervision in the hallways, security at the games

Spartana: How do you plan to personally impact Homestead?

Kintz: Obviously I love working with kids, that's what I've done the majority of my life. I [even] enjoy dealing with kids [who] are coming to my office for very negative reasons. I wouldn't have left my old position in dealing with delinquent kids if I didn't think this was a great opportunity to try to catch kids before they get to that point.

Spartana: What lessons are you bringing from previous jobs?

Kintz: Unfortunately I know the worst of the worst. I know what some kids are capable of. Kids aren't going to be able to get much over on me because I've already been there. I've dealt with those situations before. But also what I don't want to present [is that] I'm out to get you. I want to catch you before you make these mistakes and put yourself in these poor situations and get yourself where you keep coming back to my office or end up getting in trouble with the law.

Spartana: Do you forsee any problems here?

Kintz: No. Both Mr. Rhoades and I are very proactive, so that's why you've seen us out in the halls and the lunchroom. That way we are there, not to be forceful disciplinarians, but just so kids can see us so maybe they think before they do something that gets them in trouble. Hopefully we're giving teachers and kids a feeling of safety and security. Ultimately the perfect day for me is that I don't have to see any kids and I'm out interacting.

Spartana: What observations have you made about the student body?

Kintz: Kids here are nice and friendly. They're very actively engaged in things, which I appreciate. You guys have wonderful opportunities here. You guys are taking great advantage of those things and that's one of the things I would hope to encourage with the kids that do come into my office. If I find out they're not doing anything, that's when I need to step in and try to promote some of the wonderful activities that you guys have.

Spartana: What are your main goals?

Kintz: I think I would be more attuned to answer that after I get a little more acclimated, but I think my main goal here being in the 9th grade academy is to make sure that the freshman class, goes on to be successful. I want to see their graduation rate to be higher. I want to see their attendance increase. I want to see large amounts of their student body involved in activities.

Spartana: How will you achieve those goals?

Kintz: I think by interaction with kids. [I want to] give them better ways to handle situations. If I just sit down and tell a kid that comes into my office… 'You screwed up,' and provide all the information for them it doesn't cause them to think [or] engage in the process of correcting the problem. That to me is where the teacher in me comes out.

Spartana: What is the biggest surprise you've come across?

Kintz: I knew that the numbers here were very large but until your immersed in it you don't have a complete understanding of it. First day of lunch was an adventure for me. [At my old job] I would deal with literally maybe 150 kids in a day. The mass the volume of students would probably be one of the biggest changes for me.

Spartana: Do you have any last words?

Kintz: I'm very thankful to be here. I'm having a great time and I would encourage the students to come up [to me]. Don't be intimidated. Say hello and introduce yourselves. I would like to get to know a little bit about all of you.

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Profanity may appear in *the Spartana* with the approval of the adviser, but only in cases of direct quotations, or if it is necessary for the clarity. Material which is libelous or obscene and could cause a substantional and material disruptio nas defined by the supreme court will not be printed.

Public input will be accepted in forms of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel and obscenity. Those which could case a substantial and material disruption as defined by the supreme court will not be printed. Letters can be E-mailed to *the Spartana* at thespartana@gmail.com, or dropped off in room 620.

Staff members support the First Amendment rights and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the editorial board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. students will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

E-mail: thespartana@gmail.com

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Opinion

Friday, September 7, 2007

New school rules divide students

Is the administration taking the 'safety of the students' past extremes?

By Ian Strelec
Opinion Writer

So…after two and a half months of summer break, I re-entered the school hallways, relatively excited about seeing a great many of my friends that I missed over the summer. As the day progressed, however, I came to the realization that things had taken a definite shift in the school that I've been a part of for three years. After our class meetings, as well as the start-of-term speeches most teachers give, I will assume you are all aware of the new cell phone policy, closed lunches, and other things.

In the case of cell phones, the administration claims that students caught texting in class could very well be cheating or sending each other test answers. This, however illogical it may seem to some of us, is a valid concern. The argument that cell phones ringing during class can be disruptive is also completely valid. However, the new policy states that administrators and staff can take phones away if they are seen, and can search students if they suspect that a student might have a cell phone. Add on the detail that the parents of the student have to claim their child's phone at the end of the day, and I say we have a problem. Despite the misuse of cell phones by some of the students, it hardly seems fair to keep students from keeping phones on their person, if for simplicity's sake alone. There are plenty of completely reasonable excuses for not leaving a phone out in your car. Not actually owning a car is a major one. Let's say you have after-school activities and need to call your parents for a ride home, since the end times (like is often the case with practices and rehersals) aren't always fixed. Cell phones are a relatively new thing, at least in the current level of availability, and so it's understandable that the older generation isn't sure how best to handle the issue short of repressing cell phones altogether.

Then the computers! Almost everything you can possibly do on a computer has been prevented by Southwest Allen County's computer specialists, except Microsoft Office on a few machines. You can't right-click on the mouse, which is by far the simplest method of dealing with a lot of issues. Some of the computers don't even have a 'My Computer' button, so it's difficult to even get into your network folder. I can't even tell you how many times I've seen "This operation has been cancelled due to restrictions in effect on this computer." And the filters? I tried to research censorship on a school-suggested information page, and the censorship article was blocked. The goal in school and technology should be to move forward, but adaptation to technology just isn't happening here.

"Never let formal education get in the way of your learning," Mark Twain said. As far as I'm concerned, formal education is valuable, but life experience is more valuable. And at this point, the school is doing its job too well. The school's new crackdowns put many restrictions on the students who haven't done anything wrong in an effort to catch the few who have. And, honestly, I'm of the opinion that the troublemakers will just find new ways to bypass the restrictions.

I don't know if random drug testing has actually caught anybody at all. The students need to be given the chance to make that choice for themselves. We're not children anymore, and trying to make our decisions for us isn't going to teach us anything.

I don't know if random drug testing has actually caught anybody at all. The students need to be given the chance to make that choice for themselves. We're not children anymore, and trying to make our decisions for us isn't going to teach us anything. And what it comes down to is that high school may be designed for formal education, but many life experiences happen in those four years as well. It could be argued that the new rules are for the 'safety of the students,' but you could just as easily look at our parents and teachers, who most likely didn't grow up being watched by security cameras and cops, and see that they're completely successful people. My parents weren't randomly drug tested and they didn't have a drug dog. From what I can tell, that's pretty much the case with everyone a generation ahead of us. And it's not like drugs weren't around in the 70's and 80's either, which means those students made informed, intelligent decisions without the school's 'help.'

So I wonder…when does it stop? It almost feels lately like the life is being beaten out of this school. Nothing entertaining happens because everyting is against the rules, and kids are terrified of repercussions. The most that has happened for a senior prank in years is the painting of graduation years on street signs. There's no life in this school, just white-washed halls and cops turned administrators. Is that really a good environment for kids to be growing up in?

POLICY CHANGES

The use of cell phones, ipods, and other electronic devices is not permitted during the school day.

School dance times have been changed from 8 PM to 12 AM to this year's schedule of 7:30 PM to 11:30 PM.

The closed lunch policy has resulted in the closing of Student Government's back room. In addition, parents may no longer bring in snacks and treats for extracurricular activities.

Two new disciplinary deans have been added to the administration.

Random drug testing will continue during the school year.

Are Homestead's new rules as oppressive as implied by some students?

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Writer

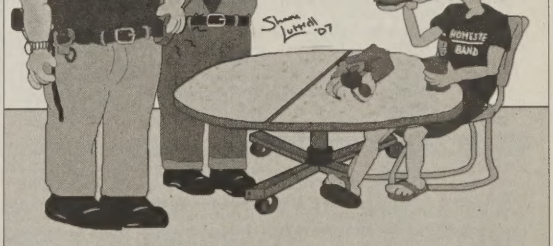
After only two and a half weeks of school, it is already apparent that some major changes have taken place at Homestead. We have a new principal, new deans, new rules, and, as some would contend, a new atmosphere. Seemingly insignificant changes seem to have prompted, at least from a certain group of students, major reaction. Students have already begun to complain of the oppressive nature of the new Homestead rules. For these students, one obvious and rational solution is this: get over it.

I can understand that a certain allure comes with taking a stand against an authority figure, but in this case that stand is completely unwarranted. Many complaints have come from a cell phone policy students view as overkill. Many argue that students are responsible enough to have their cell phones without being a distraction to class. Homestead's policy toward cell phones is not unique. Other high schools, college classes, and most employers do not allow cell phones in certain situations. Homestead is not a prison. Keeping us in the cafeteria until the bell is to prevent kids from wandering around the school, doing whatever they feel like. While that might sound great, it isn't exactly the best way to ensure student safety. The school takes on the responsibility of providing students with a safe environment from 7:50 in the morning until 2:35 in the afternoon. As such, it is their responsibility to foresee situations that could put students in harm's way.

Though all the precautions schools take might seem unnecessary, schools must protect students from even the most unbelievable occurrences. Programs such as drug testing and having a drug dog have been criticized as overly invasive. Random drug testing is provided through a grant to Homestead and these programs are designed to help students. They are used constructively to identify and provide help to students with a problem, not to invade student privacy. As far as the new administers are concerned, the changes in the administration team do not necessarily reflect an attempt to control students. The function of new administrators is to delegate responsibilities more effectively and to make the administration more responsive to students. Homestead is not in any way overly constrictive of its students. There are rules in place to protect students' interests and to ensure that the school day runs smoothly. Essentially, the fact that Homestead teachers and administrators must act in loco parentis necessitates even seemingly unnecessary safety measures be taken.

Students at Homestead need to recognize how privileged they are to attend one of the best high schools in the nation. Homestead is not an extreme example of student conditions. The administration is not out to get you. We attend a high school with a history of strong academic performance, dedicated teachers, and safe conditions. Simple things like staying in the cafeteria and not using your cell phone are not reasons to start protesting unfair treatment.

In the end, all this talk of a student uprising to protest the inequities of Homestead is unfounded. Maybe it's just the nature of students to be rebellious or maybe they are just so used to the privileges they enjoy that they overlook them at times. But whatever the reason for the recent frustration among students at Homestead, one possible explanation can be categorically dismissed: legitimate complaints.



Props to Those Behind-the-Scenes

A 'thank you' for the work put in by Homestead's cast of unsung heroes

High school is more than students, teachers, and administrators. Although students may have the most direct interaction with their peers and teachers, they also owe a debt to others who are a less visible though just as important part of this school. Within the walls of Homestead, there are many other essential personnel that students often overlook. Nurses, attendance workers, librarians, counselors, and maintenance comprise a staff of unheralded workers without whom Homestead could not function. And so, because these people receive such little attention and appreciation, we would like to mention their importance and highlight the key role they play in Homestead's operation.

School nurses are more than a get-out-of-jail-free card. Nurses care for any and all Homestead students needing attention, medical or otherwise. From those who happen to have "head-aches" during their chemistry tests to students who daily need medication or some other type of care, nurses receive a steady stream of students whose needs they must be constantly attentive to. So whether you have a legitimate case of the flu, or just a math quiz, the nurses are always there. Though a trip to the clinic doesn't necessarily ensure a trip home from school, it will always include the consideration and care that only a dedicated school nurse can provide. Even if you just need to lie down for a few minutes, the nurses are always accommodating to those with legitimate needs.

Located right next to the clinic is the attendance office. The attendance staff is also under-valued by the student body. Overseeing early dismissals may be the most popular of their duties among students, however their importance is much more far-reaching. When you come in late after missing first period, for legitimate reasons of course, they welcome you back with open arms and a pass to your next class. The workers in the attendance office are always friendly and patient, regardless of the bogus excuse you try to explain your lateness with.

We are privileged to have so many adults willing to work to provide us with the education we receive. While we are blessed with great teachers, there are unsung heroes who make just as significant a contribution to our education and our lives.

Although you may have only seen the librarians on several occasions during forced class visits and you have probably heard the IMC database speech for every research paper you've ever written, librarians do deserve appreciation for the effort they put forth. Though you probably walk by the IMC every day, it is doubtful that you fully appreciate it as a resource. If you have ever cared enough to ask for assistance on a project, then you know that our librarians are knowledgeable about many topics are always willing to help. Though it may seem like more work, Google is not a replacement for the more substantial resources that librarians always provide. Students should take advantage of all that the IMC offers even when they don't have a research paper due date looming.

There are some at Homestead who may go their entire high school career without ever really getting to know their counselor. These students are wasting a valuable opportunity to develop a relationship with some of the most friendly, helpful, and intelligent adults at Homestead. From fixing schedules to applying for college your guidance counselor is indispensable. Despite being responsible for each and every student, counselors are still able to foster personal relationships. They ensure you will graduate on time, know about scholarship opportunities, and have someone to talk to regardless of the circumstances. Student services is filled with people committed so seeing students succeed, doing all that they can to prepare students for life after high school.

Few can truly comprehend the tremendous contributions that the maintenance staff makes for Homestead. The maintenance staff's workday does not end at 2:35; but carries on through the night and even into the summer. Though they may never interact directly with students, their contribution to our education is still substantial. The simple things we take for granted; clean hallways and empty trashcans, these often-overlooked necessities are made possible by our maintenance staff.

We know that we will inevitably forget to mention some of the people who thanklessly work with and for students here everyday. But the point of this isn't to name all of those people; it's to get you to realize all that Homestead and its employees gives to us. We are privileged to have so many adults willing to work to provide us with the education we receive. While we are blessed with great teachers, there are unsung heroes who make just as significant a contribution to our education and our lives.

Many of these sorts of articles end with lines like "so the next time you see your (insert word here) be sure to say thank you." So we won't say that, exactly. You don't have to tell them how important they are, but if you don't vocalize your gratitude at least be aware that it is deserved.

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fort wayne, indiana 46814

Life

Writer Haley Zimmerman reviews new release "Superbad". See page 7A

Friday, September 7, 2007

Homecoming brings back dance

Week of festivities includes college day, wacky day, hippie day, spirit day

By Taylor Hartruff with Reporting By Hana Hawash
Life Editor and Writer

Fanatic football fans, typical game goers, and the all-important Homecoming Court all tie into the emphasis and excitement of the Homecoming game. Even those who can't tell which side is defense or which is offense are looking forward to tonight's game.

"I get nervous for the football games," Leslie Byrant (12) said, "but no matter what, I always enjoy them."

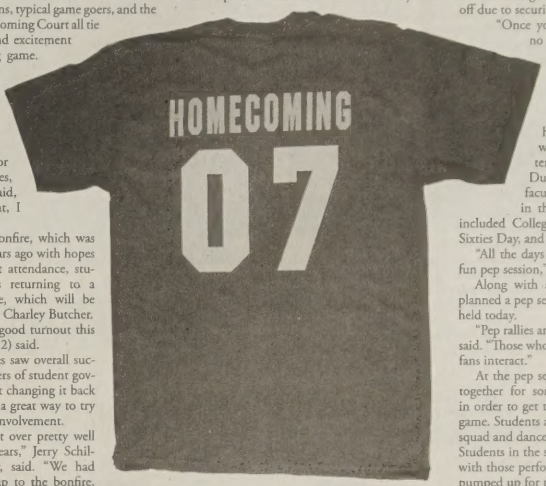
In place of the bonfire, which was implemented two years ago with hopes of increasing student attendance, student government is returning to a Homecoming Dance, which will be hosted by disc jockey Charley Butcher.

"I hope we get a good turnout this year," Phil Reiman (12) said.

While the bonfires saw overall success, this year members of student government decided that changing it back to a dance would be a great way to try to get more student involvement.

"The bonfire went over pretty well the last couple of years," Jerry Schillinger, administrator, said. "We had more people show up to the bonfire, but going back to the dance is something we can do."

In years past, dances typically have started at 8:00 p.m. and lasted until midnight, but this year all dances will begin and end earlier. Dances later in the year will begin at 7:30 p.m. but due to the football game Homecoming is scheduled to start at around 8:30 and conclude at 11:30. These changes are to help ensure that students are home by a decent hour.



"I understand [the new times]," April Moss, student council advisor, said. "Kids have curfews, and the idea is to get them home [on time]."

As in years prior to the bonfire, the dance will be held in the cafeteria. Those who attend will be able to enter through the Auxiliary Gym doors, but the remaining areas of the school will be blocked off due to security regulations.

"Once you enter the dance, there will be no pass-outs," Shillinger said. "This means you can't leave the dance, go somewhere, and then come back again."

With hopes of an increase in school spirit, student government had once again created a "spirit week." This started Tuesday, September 4th, and went through today. During those four days, students and faculty were encouraged to participate in the designated theme days, which included College Gear Day, Wacky Wednesday, Sixties Day, and today's School Spirit Day.

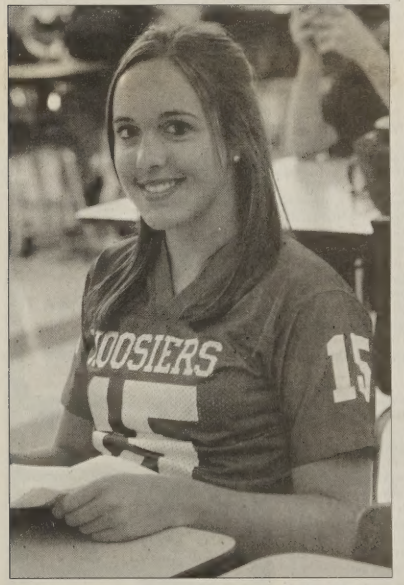
"All the days were planned, and we hope on a fun pep session," Moss said.

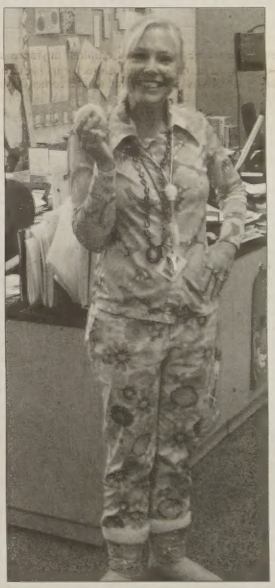
Along with spirit week, student government planned a pep session in the main gym, which was held today.

"Pep rallies are always fun for everyone," Bryant said. "Those who perform really get into it, and the fans interact."

At the pep session, students and faculty joined together for some school spirit and celebration in order to get the football players excited for the game. Students and teams such as the varsity cheer squad and dance teams were able to perform there. Students in the stands were encouraged to interact with those performing, and really focus on getting pumped up for this evening's festivities.

With all of the energy centered on school activities leading up to the big game, it is easy to forget about the game itself. The boys are hopeful for a victory against the Columbia City Eagles.





Left: Emily Aeschliman (12) shows her school spirit on College Day.
Above: Kate Taylor (12) dresses for Wacky Wednesday
Right: Jan Venderly, English Teacher, dresses for Wacky Wednesday as well.
Top: This year's Homecoming T-shirt.
Photos by Suzie Reecer

Rave toughens admittance to R-movies

Tough, new policy has students upset

Arpita Bhardwaj
Writer

R-rated movies are known to be inappropriate for those under the age of seventeen, but recently, Rave Motion Pictures has begun checking identification in an effort to tighten their security concerning the movies in question. Those under seventeen years of age must have adult supervision when viewing an R-rated movie at a theater.

Until now, many movie theaters, such as Rave, have not taken the initiative to make sure that no one under the set age limit enters a restricted movie.

"It's really a new movie theater policy," Zack Elick, Rave Employee said, accounting for the rule's sudden enforcement.

This new "policy," however, has surfaced several questions in the minds of students who deem it unjust, claiming that movie theaters do not have the right to filter their viewing selection when their parents allow them to see R-rated movies at home.

"I think it's unfair because some peoples' parents allow them to see R-rated movies, even though they're underage," Lauren Carter (10) said.

Not only has this rule created discontent among underage teens, but it has also interfered with parents lives. Some sort of pass should be made that only parents of younger teens should be able to buy for their kids, saying it's okay.

Because many students' parents care strongly about the movies their children are seeing, tighter security may relieve parental concern by assuring them that their child will not be able to view inappropriate material away from home. If a student's parents did not want him or her to see an R-rated movie in the past, the child could have gone to the theater, unattended by an adult, and have been easily able to buy a ticket for a restricted movie, no questions asked. With Rave Motion Picture's new policy in place, however, such circumstances will no longer occur.

Even with such rules in place, students have found flaws in the system.

"It's no secret that teens buy tickets for other movies and can just walk into an R-rated one," Tom Ault (10) said. "If this policy is so important all of the sudden, there should be more employees checking stubs in front of theater halls of R-rated movies."

Students have also begun to question why R-rated movies are being carded when PG-13 movies are not, arguing that it would only make sense considering that they too contain inappropriate content and language for those under the age limit.

Amrita Khemka (12), who is now 17 years old, still believes that the carding policy is far too harsh.

"Even though I'm allowed to see these movies, I still know what it felt like to not be able to," Khemka said. "[Even] this new carding rule, kids will still go into R-rated movies, I'm sure."

Backroom shut due to closed lunch

Flor Ortega and Hana Svetlovics
Writers

Why did the farmer bury all his money? To make his soil rich. Silly jokes like these used to be available to students via Laffy Taffy wrappers sold in the backroom at lunch. However, this year, with the implement of a closed lunch, the backroom is no longer available to students.

"Taking away the backroom has taken away part of student government," Ashley Meruani (10), sophomore class treasurer, said.

On August 30, a meeting was held with the new principal Mr. Smith to discuss student government issues and make an attempt at reaching resolutions.

"He wants to get to know the student government and take questions," April Moss, student government sponsor said.

Last year, and for many years before that, the student council set up shop in the backroom, offering candy everyday while also selling shirts and tickets for entrance into dances.

"I honestly think that it was really beneficial to buy stuff there," Rachel Ford (11) said.

Not only was it good for students, it was also beneficial for student government members.

"Being able to work in the backroom was always an extra incentive for student government members. Now that we aren't allowed to do that, students will lose knowledge of what their student government does for them," Quinn Brenneke (10), sophomore class president, said.

Student government members feel it was unfair for administrators to take away the backroom without warning.

"We worked so hard for the student population, it's just really frustrating," Brenneke said.

By purchasing new equipment for the backroom, student government fulfilled their responsibilities as representatives.

"Last year we got complaints that we only offered candy, and that we should offer healthy food. So, we listened to what was being said, and we bought a freezer to store healthy Popsicles. Now, the very next year, we aren't allowed to use what we bought," Meruani said.

On an average year, student government usually makes $1,000 dollars from sales in the backroom. Last year with the purchase of the freezer and goods, $3,700 was spent, while $4,300 was earned, which makes their profit from last year $600.

"Besides the cafeteria being in lock down mode, we never found out if there were any other reasons for us not being able to use the room. All we want is a chance to prove ourselves," Brenneke said.

While money may not be an issue currently, students in the fifth period government class are unsure what is going to be done with the time that was normally spent on the backroom. During class, two members were assigned to each lunch rotation to sit in the backroom and sell the merchandise.

"Right now we're busy planning out Homecoming, but when our time isn't being consumed by that, we won't have as much to do as we normally did," Meruani said.

The room is now being used in the mornings by clubs that only sell breakfast items. This could cause confusion, because at the moment there isn't a designated spot for the sale of shirts. The current plan is to sell them at the back of the cafeteria by the entrance doors. Although student government would be permitted to sell shirts in the cafeteria, heath regulations state that candy is not allowed to be sold in there.

With no place available to sell candy, student government is at a loss as to what to do with the left over merchandise from last year.

"We're thinking about selling the leftovers at dances, but then student government members would have to give up their time from the dance to stand at the table and sell it," Meruani said.

"People will miss it and daily customers will suffer. You may not see the effects this year or even next year, but if the backroom never gets reopened, there will be noticeable effects in the future," Meruani said.

Student council members are not the only ones missing the backroom.

"It was a lot of fun to get a little pick-up during the middle of the day," Lauren Bachle (12) said.

"Without the backroom," Brenneke said, "Lunch is not the same."

A home away from home

Waeber, Colderon experience high school in America

By Brad Lufkin
Writer

Thousands of miles away from home, foreign exchange students Aline Waeber and Tatiana Calderon are favorably adapting to life in Fort Wayne. Waeber, who is from Switzerland, and Calderon, who is from Ecuador, are enjoying the United States, the people, and their new school, but they have had to make some major adjustments.

"It's not really the same as home, but I like it," Waeber said, an exchange student who will be staying in Fort Wayne with her host sister Kelsey Amstutz (11) and her family for ten months.

Both Waeber and Calderon, who are each honorary seniors, came to the United States through a program called Youth for Understanding, abbreviated "YFU." This is a non-profit organization that sends over 2,000 students all over the world to foreign countries each year to live with a family and attend high school.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

"My everyday routine really hasn't changed all that much," Amstutz said. "We get to teach Aline about our culture, but we get to learn about Swiss culture too. And having another sibling is always fun."

While Fort Wayne schools have competitive sports, most Swiss schools do not. Nevertheless, the students' social lives are just like American students'.

"In my school, you can't do very many sports. There is just one lesson in which you have sports with the same class," Waeber said. "After school, most of the students stay in the city with friends."

Students may not realize it, but high schools in different countries are vastly different from each other.

"In my school, everyday you have different classes and you are in every class with the same people," Waeber said. "And we eat lunch outside also."

Calderon's school in Ecuador also differs from the typical American public high school.

"My school is private, so we wear uniforms. We stay in one class all day, and the teachers come to you," Calderon said.

American food is a major facet of life with which Waeber and Calderon both have had to cope. However, Waeber will not have to adjust quite as much as Calderon may.

"The biggest difference is in the food. In Ecuador, people eat guinea pig, and we only eat lunch. There is no breakfast and only coffee for dinner," Calderon said. "So here, there is so much food."

Calderon, who calls herself "Tati," arrived in Fort Wayne at the beginning of August from Ecuador with the goal in mind to learn English and make a lot of new friends. Unlike many exchange students who are extremely well versed in English prior to traveling, Calderon is starting from next to scratch.

"Our language barrier was huge. So without knowing that she came to learn English made the first days very hard, seeing that I'm the only one in my family that knows Spanish," Calderon's exchange sister Ashton Brown (11) said. "But she seems to be getting much better day by day."

Whenever anyone leaves home for even a week or two, one is bound become homesick. On the other hand, exchange students are away from home for up to a year, while they further study English, make new friends, and learn other things.

"I most miss my family, friends, and the food," Calderon said.

Like many native students, Calderon and Waeber both hope to be very involved in school activities, with Waeber wanting to maybe join a dance group and Calderon hoping to make the cheerleading squad in the winter.

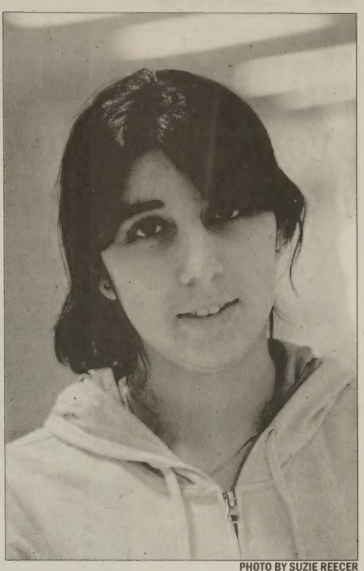


PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Even with all the changes that have come with moving to a new country for an extended period of time, the exchange students this year are hoping to have an average American teenage experience.

"I hope to experience many fun things during my time in Fort Wayne," Waeber said.

Left: Aline Waeber (12) of Switzerland is staying with Kelsey Amstutz (11). Above: Tatiana Colderon (12) of Ecuador is staying with Ashton Brown(11).

Teacher profile: Steve Clough

English teacher works on family history; novels

With nearly seventeen feet of family history proudly charted, English teacher Steve Clough continues to work hard in the pursuit of information to fill the shrinking gaps in his ancestors' lives. Raiding the English Archives, he travels to England each year in the pursuit of untangling the twisted paths of family bloodlines. Clough has compiled his work into nearly three books and has uncovered several "skeletons in the closet." However, even with all that he has achieved, he insists that the most valuable treasure he has found is the experience itself.

Spartana: What first sparked your interest in learning about your family history?

Clough: In 1995 I learned for the first time that my great grandfather had not come from Liverpool, which is what he had told the family, so for a hundred years we thought he was from Liverpool, England, but we found out from his obituary in 1913 that he came from a place about a hundred twenty miles away called Yorkshire Dales. That began to get me thinking about the fact that, if I was going to England, maybe I could go to his hometown and see where this mysterious guy had come from.

I've been over (to the same area of Northern England), twelve different times, as of this summer, and on each of those trips I've done some additional work. Three of the trips have been Homestead trips with Homestead students, so I've had a chance to do only little bits and pieces, but I've worked on it every time I've been over. We now have every document that exists in all of the English Archives on every person from World War I back to about 1660. So we've done very well. The family tree now, if you spread it out, and unroll the scroll is about seventeen feet long.

Clough: This summer I was introduced to a cousin who has been looking for me for twenty-two years. I have been looking for him for twelve. We've become extremely good friends, spent a lot of time together. For forty years he had been looking for a cemetery on our family farm that our ancestors owned for two-hundred fifty years. He had basically given it up, thought that it didn't exist, but he had an old, old great-uncle who told him that it was there. So a very long story short, in June, we went … and talked to the farmer who got a map out, and we showed him a will of the last Clough owner of the property that talked about the cemetery, and … on a wind-blown, rainy, awful night, he took us in his land rover to the top of the hill, and we found a graveyard, where this group of people from the 1600's, 1700's, and into the 1800's had defected from the church of England and had become Quakers, and they were, therefore, not allowed to be buried in the normal church cemeteries, so they were buried on Broughtenfield farm on this gorgeous hilltop from which, down three the valleys, you can see over twenty miles in each direction. It was magic.

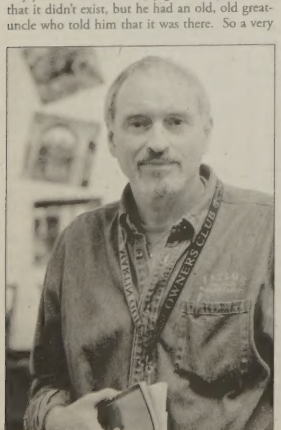


PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

I also found a clock in 1995 that my great-great grandfather had built, after being told that the man didn't exist. That there were no Clough clockmakers with his name, with our last name, and shortly after that phone conversation, I walked into a house that had a William Clough Clock standing in it. The bottom line that may be most wonderful of all, is that the owner of that clock has now been diagnosed with MS, and is going to have to get rid of the clock. He has to convert the whole lower floor of his house, and so I'm hoping that, by 2008, it will be in my living room, so a hundred sixty-seven years and five thousand miles to get back into the family.

Spartana: Tell us about the books you have written concerning your findings.

Clough: I've been working on two books since 2003, when I won a Lily Grant, and then, of course, it's the Lily Grant that sent me back this summer and will send me again on two more bits of this thing next year. The first one is called Finding William, and I'm after the story of my great-great-grandfather, the clockmaker, William Clough (1860-1866), died of small pox in the middle of the city of Preston, back in the Industrial Revolution again. That entire story is the story of what I have found and how I have found it. This circuitous route that I've been on, and all the crazy things that have happened. Into the document I've put all the pictures of all the people, of all the places. I have scanned in all of the birth records, death records, marriage records, and baptism certificates. Anything that we have found, all of that is recorded in as a legacy to the family. A very few more things to go on that, but essentially, I'm done with it.

The second one is called, Sweet William, and it's my imagination, plus the facts, and I'm trying to tell, in a historical novel, the story of the life of William Clough. The focus of my project this summer, was to finish the one, get to as close to finishing the other as I could, and Finding William is essentially done, unless I get the clock and have to add a P. S. Sweet William is all there, it's in front of me, but I still can't see the ending.

Spartana: Do you plan to compile your findings into any other written works?

Clough: I have already started a third book that I hadn't really intended to or didn't know if I was ever going to be interested in, but it's already going. It just happened automatically, and that is going to take the story from the death of William in 1866 to the 1871 immigration of my great-grandfather, Joel Ezra Clough. His is a story that's amazing as well. He came into Montreal, Canada, and ended up coming down into Lake Champlain, New York, and then, through a wonderful turn of events, and a very long, complicated story, in which somebody was going to kill him, he ended up fleeing and going to Nebraska where he became a pioneer on a farm, and was given a hundred sixty acres. He then bought another hundred sixty, and so, a guy who knew very little about farming, became a farmer, and had to build a farm out of nothing.

Spartana: If you could go back in time and meet one of your deceased family members, who would it be and why?

Clough: William the Clockmaker. Everything that shows up in all of the records I've found continues to point back to this man. It's like the hub of the wheel and everything else is spokes, and everything goes back to him. In the next generation, following William, almost every one of his ten surviving children named their first son William. In their children, the first son is named William, and so, there is this connection that seems to point back to the reverence and the affection and the respect that everybody remembered because of this man.

Spartana: What would you suggest someone who is interested in learning their family history do to get started?

Clough: One of the greatest opportunities that anybody would ever want to have is the Fort Wayne, Allen County Public Library. It has the second or third best genealogy collection in the world. I now have friends from England who are emailing me, wanting me to find things about their family that they can't find over there. (A few) weeks ago, we just had the National Genealogical Convention here. So, if anybody is interested, this is the place to do it. The library produces workshops to teach you how to do it. The staff there is very helpful, and ironically, in my entire process, I've only used our library twice because I've been able to go back and get original documents, in the original places, but for people who can't do that, there's absolutely no place better than our library.

Spartana: What are the benefits of learning one's family history?

Clough: It's not life changing, but it's been just dramatic and really a great deal of fun for me, and very confirming and affirming as well. For most Americans I think it continues to be an issue that doesn't make much difference. It's become a probably beyond a mania for me, maybe into obsession. I'm passionate about it because I've found such wonderful things: skeletons in the closet, the clock, the cousin, and the other things that we've found. So the more I've discovered, the more wonderful revelations we have found, and I think that, in the entire process, perhaps the most rewarding thing of all is the relationships that I've made.

The genealogist who's been working with me for two years said, just last year, "Oh, wouldn't it have been wonderful if you could have found me right at the beginning, and you would have avoided so much trouble." And I said, "Yes, but think of the stories I never would have found. I never would have found the clock. I never would have found so many of these other people and places if I had not been blundering on my own." So yes, it would have been more efficient, and I would have found more things, more quickly, but the journey has been as important as the destination.

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filmreview by Haley Zimmerman

Vulgar, raunchy, explicit, hilarious. Superbad is quite possibly the best teen comedy ever made. Once you get past the shocking and usually obscene comedy, it's just plain difficult not to laugh your way through the movie. You may be laughing from enjoyment or you may be laughing because you're so utterly appalled you don't know how else to react. Either way, this movie is going to make you chuckle out loud.

The main plot focuses on two pals, Seth and Evan, who are trying to get their long-term crushes to notice them in their last days of high school. Jonah Hill portrays the bumbling, overweight, and not-so-smooth with the ladies man Seth with Michael Cera as his best friend, Evan. Cera (you may remember him as George Michael from the television series Arrested Development) performs beautifully as an absolutely clueless young man pining after his dream girl.

Created by the same guys who made the recent summer hit Knocked Up, Superbad reflects many principles highlighted in that movie but connects more with the younger generation. Writers Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg began the script for this movie while still in high school and loosely based the main characters on themselves. Rogen appears as one-half of a police officer duo who, after you're done laughing your pants off, make you wonder (in horror) what exactly cops do in their spare time.

Apart from the comedic genius, the dialogue is really what makes this movie great. The characters' speech is fairly accurate to how most people actually talk, rather than a bunch of fluff you wouldn't hear in the real world.

If you're under 17 you'll have to enjoy this movie in the painful company of a parent or guardian. Unless you're wearing your super-sneaky pants, the employees at Rave aren't going to let you in without supervision.

1. Hill portrayed the uptight, MacBook-toting Sherman Schrader in last year's *Accepted*, best known for his theatrics in a hot dog outfit; 2. Collaborating with mentor Judd Apatow once again, Hill plays adult website entrepreneur Jonah in June's critically-acclaimed *Knocked Up*; 3. Hill starred alongside Steve Carrell in *Evan Almighty* as Eugene, a government aid with stalker tendencies.

musicreviews by Brad Lufkin

Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga
Spoon

Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga (which I will from now on just refer to as Ga) is Spoon's sixth album. Led by singer Britt Daniel, Spoon has changed their approach little by little each album. The title was originally intended to also be the title to the second track, "The Ghost Of You Lingers," which would represent the song's staccato piano part.

Going by in a flash, Ga is a mere 36 minutes long and has more than enough replay value. In the beginning, Spoon had a few so-so records, but in the past few years, they have had a few amazing albums and Ga just may bring forth the surge in fan base they've been looking for.

The album is very minimalist and uncluttered, allowing each part of every song to stand out. With a limited amount of dominant guitar and an unusual composure for each song, Spoon has succeeded in making a truly unique indie rock album.

When the opening track, "Don't Make Me A Target," starts up, it draws you in to the rest of the album. The smooth, yet coarse prologue really catches your attention and starts the rest of the album off on a great note.

"The Ghost Of You Lingers" (originally titled "Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga") is defined by its piano, which is almost hypnotizing. You get lost in the song, and it feels like a constant build up to something bigger. And yet, nothing happens. The music just continues with its hypnotic piano, leaving you with an incomplete, but great, feeling.

Probably their bounciest song on the CD is "The Underdog." It showcases Daniel's signature vocals with some nice horns and a bit of acoustic guitar. It's a perfect contrast with the following song, "My Little Japanese Cigarette Case," which is fascinating and shows some of that minimalism that Spoon has on Ga. "The Underdog" will continuously bound through your head for a while.

As Spoons best album yet, Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga will hopefully pave the way for increasingly better records, and a growing fan base. The album is a combination of focus and originality that will expand Spoon's horizons.

The Hair, The TV, The Baby, & The Band
Imperial Teen

Imperial Teen is a San Francisco-based alt-pop band known for their boy/girl vocals. The Hair, The TV, The Baby & The Band, their most recently released CD, is intelligent, lively, tender, and sharp.

Since the beginning of their five-year hiatus, one has lost his hair, another did something with television, one had a baby, and apparently there's another band. The growth and maturity of the musicians is definitely showcased in the album, with all the upbeat songs even having a kind of bittersweet tone behind them.

With songs such as "Sweat Potato," they still manage to create energetic, shout-along songs that are close to their best work. When it comes to the lyrics, they are just as sly and witty as ever, which shows that they have not entirely lost their young innocence and cleverness.

The album opener, "Everything," is a cheerful garage pop tune in which the singer claims to "love everything that is wonderful and everything that is horrible." It sings of life's highs and lows in a '60s-pop fashion.

Some songs like "Shim Sham" sound like they could have been created by an older B-52's. It's a pop-punk blast of coming of age story, told from a woman's perspective, in the world of punk rock. It's a great song with enough "oh-oh-oh-ohs" to get stuck in your head for a while.

The title track "Baby And The Band" is a freakishly catchy song with a mellow beat and fun lyrics. It really shows what the time off has done for them. For most bands, a five-year break would be disastrous, but for the Imperial Teens, it has paid off.

"Do It Better" is a sweet swooner that has a rough rock chorus that absolutely stands out on the album as one of the best songs. It is a very relaxing yet upbeat song that's just kind of addicting and draws you into the CD.

It's very rare that an alternative pop record is this uncomplicated and simple. The Hair, The TV, The Baby & The Band is the proof that Imperial Teens have not gone anywhere and can continue to create brilliant albums.

Icky Thump
The White Stripes

After a relatively unproductive 2006, the sibling duo The White Stripes has just come out with their sixth studio album, Icky Thump. The album was released on two limited edition USB drives, as well as on CD and 180 gram vinyl format. Each of the 3,333 released 512 MB drives artfully depicted either Meg or Jack and contained the full album.

The title track of their album is their most successful single ever, reaching twenty-six on the top forty chart of the Billboard's Hot 100. It is a major lyrical change for The White Stripes. A rarity with The White Stripes, "Conquest" is a cover of a Patti Page song. It features great trumpet layering, giving the effect of a whole band of trumpets in the background. There's also a guitar/trumpet duel, which is laid over an almost mariachi rhythm.

While Icky Thump has a loose 70's rock feel in places, The White Stripes branch out a bit, throwing a bit of blues and folk into songs like "Catch Hell Blues" and "300 M.P.H. Torrential Outpour Blues," making the album experimental, even for the White Stripes. "Catch Hell Blues" features gentle to explosive tempo shifts and exciting and amazing guitar work and despite the fact that "300 M.P.H. Torrential Outpour Blues" is one of the slowest songs on the album, it packs quite a musical punch. The guitar riffs and runs are infectious, as are the crazy, screechy solos. It is definitely reminiscent of Bob Dylan, and unlike anything the White Stripes have created before.

The closing track, "Effect And Cause," closes out the album perfectly, with a simple acoustic guitar and Jack's impressive vocals. It really rounds everything up nicely, showing that The White Stripes can layer distortion with a calmer feel.

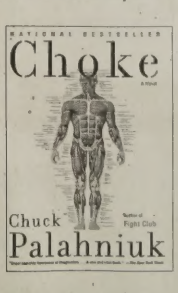
Icky Thump is a great return to The White Stripes old style as well as a departure into new territory, and it works out into a great album.

bookreviews

Choke
by Chuck Palahniuk

By Greg Kyes-Myland
Writer

Of all my summer reading (a whopping 3 books) Chuck Palahniuk's modern novel, Choke took the prize as most engaging. Palahniuk, the author of the hugely successful book-turned-movie, Fight Club, delivers yet another powerful national bestseller. Choke is the story of Victor Mancini, a young medical school student who is forced to drop out in order to make money for his mother who is in a nursing home. Victor works a low paying job as a blacksmith in Colonial Dunsboro, a Jamestown-type reenactment settlement. However, he supplements his low income by being a con-man. His "con" is to go into restaurants and, halfway through his meal, he forces himself to choke on food until some good Samaritan gives him the Heimlich maneuver and saves him. After "saving" him, the good Samaritan feels as though they are now responsible for Victor and send him money to help him pay his bills. Never before have I read a book so outrageous, classy, and humorous all at the same time. If you're looking for a quick, compelling read, I highly advise you check this book out. However, for you lazier people out there, a movie version of the novel is set to release sometime next year.



The Assault on Reason
by Al Gore

By Celia Grundman
Writer

The Assault on Reason gives insight into the extent of deception used by the current administration and how reason and logic have not been used in decision making for this country.

Gore discusses Iraq, global warming, the media, individual rights, the use of fear to manipulate, abuse of presidential power, withheld information and the need for a well-informed citizenry to make intelligent decisions. His conclusions are well-backed with numerous facts.

Intelligently written and informative, it would be a good read for any person, no matter what their political views are, offering a different viewpoint from what your own may be.

Gore mentions many actions that people in our country have taken that are sickening, making it a depressing read; but it is worth the time and provides great information to help form new views or to solidify old ones.

gamingreview

Guitar Hero Rocks the '80's

By Taylor Thompson
Writer

Video games have become increasingly more mainstream over the last few years, and, besides possibly the Wii, no innovation has influenced this movement more than Guitar Hero. The concept of the game is simple, but it can be as difficult as the player wants it to be. The original was a surprise hit, but the second iteration was when the series really exploded. This brings gamers to the latest sequel in the series: Guitar Hero Encore: Rocks the 80s.

The best way one can describe this game: same ol' same ol', but let's face it, you are getting this game for the songs. The songs are admittedly enjoyable for an 80's music fan, with classic hits such as Turning Japanese and Ballroom Blitz. However, there are only 30 songs, which is about half the amount included in the first two versions. Also, most of the music is played by cover bands instead of by the original performers.

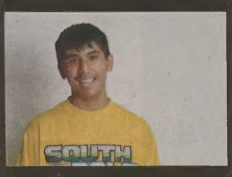
For a game that is basically an expansion, the $50 price tag is fairly unreasonable, so unless a person is dying for some new songs and can't wait for Guitar Hero III, this game is not recommended. Additionally, for those who have not yet experienced this series, Guitar Hero II is overall a much better game.

faces of homestead

photos by suzie reecer

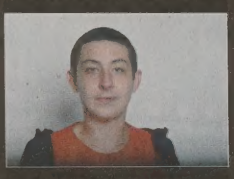
tyler duncan, junior

shonte fox, freshman


jessie muniz, freshman

casey radziewicz, freshman

alex defreeuw, junior


trent irelan, junior

brackley villers, junior

madi shurtz, sophomore

peter ali, freshman

kelly edelman, senior

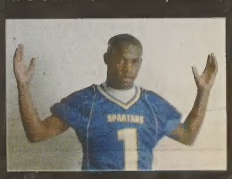
erika berghoff, freshman

meredith mccracken, senior

nick myers, senior

ryan wright, senior

[insert YOUR face here]


charles seals, senior

tony staten, junior

dania mourtada, freshman

emily croy, junior

chloe smith, sophomore

haley cordes, senior

mandy sherer, freshman

joe kaufman, sophomore

taylor chin, sophomore

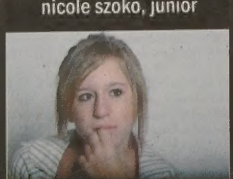
maddie shine, junior

nicole szoko, junior

alec fischer, freshman

jessie hanselmann, freshman

brandon brown, junior


tori morrison, junior

sam heasley, sophomore

naomi killham, senior

ryan alderfer, senior

theresa sciole, junior

rachael kruse, junior

preston stier, freshman

issue 1 volume 38
homestead high school
4310 homestead road
fort wayne, indiana 46814

Sports

Swinging away

Caleb Cook (11) plays during the annual Homestead Round Robin tennis tournament last Saturday. Story on page 4B

Friday, September 7, 2007

FINDING THE RIGHT MIX

Boys' and girls' cross country teams struggle to find their stride

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

The list of values often associated with cross country - endurance, perseverance, dedication - seldom includes humility.

When Homestead's boys' cross country team crossed the finish line behind a group of five Snider runners at their only home meet on August 22, Brandon Saalfrank (12) found that rare humiliation, and transformed it into motivation. "We were pretty well prepared, but that was embarrassing," said Saalfrank, one of this season's senior captains, the other two being Mike Townsend (12) and Brian Graham (12).

Saalfrank notes that Snider will be a force to be reckoned with this year and that, after spending his junior year as a major contributor to the team, he will not neglect his leadership role. Along with the two other captains, Saalfrank helped conduct summer workouts and running sessions that started the Monday following the last day of school. This off-season training was held five days a week and allowed him to make the rest of the team aware of his firm expectations. "I'm probably a bit stricter," Saalfrank said, quick to distance him from last year's captains, "I'm a little more concerned about the team than myself."

At this vital point in the team's transition of captaincy, a team-oriented leader may be just what the doctor ordered. In a conference that Coach Dick Shenfeld describes as "really strong," individual success is futile against local powerhouses such as Northrop and Bishop Dwenger, teams that placed a combined nine runners in front of Homestead at last year's IHSAA Sectional. Approaching the 2007 season, Coach Shenfeld, in his 33rd year of coaching Homestead cross country, is optimistic about the season, despite Evan Hanley's (11) departure from the team. Hanley is spending this year in Germany as a foreign exchange student. "He would've been number one," Shenfeld said. Although the loss of Hanley has left a gap in the roster, the coach admits there's "still a good pack of guys sticking together during races, and they all finish within 40 seconds." The only problem, he acknowledges, is the lack of an individual to lead that pack.

Left: Mike Townsend (12) runs with a baton in the relay-style cross country race.

The answer to that just may be Kodi Mullins (9).

Mullins, the freshman, who spent the last two years of his athletic career involved in middle school football, is "leading by performance," says Coach Shenfeld. After running the 5K at the Huntington North Invitational on August 18 in 17:10, a time usually shared by the junior and senior cross country runners, his potential became apparent. With hopes of cracking the 17-minute barrier, Mullins doesn't allow the hype to get to his head. "In high school, it means more," Mullins said, "I just want to motivate the other freshman and the rest of the team."

It's that principle - the "if one improves, we all do"-mindset - that links Homestead's cross country teams by far more than gender. Brandon Saalfrank estimates that three-year runners have slimmed their 5K times down by at least two minutes since they started cross country. The main credit: chemistry. He believes that team golf outings and bonding with other runners outside of practice has helped the boys' squad "grow a lot closer."

Girls' cross country leader Meghan Terrell (11), whose consistent performance in the past two years has earned her a spot as a captain this season, agrees that developing relationships among the runners is a key in the team morale. "It's a lot of mental work to run the races," Terrell said, "And if there was negative chemistry, things wouldn't work as well."

Recovering from an upsetting tenth place upset at last season's semi-state in New Haven, the girls' cross country team is ready for a fresh start. In addition to Terrell, Erin Quinn (12), Rachel German (12), and Rachel Taylor (12) form the group of captains that Coach Sara Wyss has confidence in to lead the team towards regional victory. Wyss, who has been coaching cross country for 16 years now, suspects inexperience played a role in last year's unsatisfactory semi-state finish, but sees no reason why the team should make the same mistakes twice.

And she's not about to accept excuses. "No, the lack of home meets won't affect us," Wyss said. "At the Saturday Invitationals, there's a concentration of good teams to continually test us." Neither will the relative youngness of the team mar the season, according to Wyss.

The team picked up Stephanie Zimmerman (11), who spent the last two years of her athletic career as a Homestead soccer player. Throughout the fall, Coach Wyss will also increasingly rely on underclassmen such as Chloe Smith (10) and Carolyn Mutton (10) to fill voids left by last year's graduates.

"We're still trying to find the right mix," Wyss said, "but we as a team work well together and share common goals."

TEAM CAPTAINS

Brandon Saalfrank (12)
Mike Townsend (12)
Brian Graham (12)

Erin Quinn (12)
Rachel German (12)
Rachel Taylor (12)
Meghan Terrell (11)

Football fluctuates, high hopes for homecoming

Quarterback Wright injured in preseason, team looks to underclassmen for recovery

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

Adversity can do one of two things to a team: it could bring a team to its knees, begging for mercy, or unite a team and make them stronger. As for the varsity football team, adversity has definitely been a part of the first two weeks of the season. With the traditional motto of "never say die," of course the team did not come down on its knees. Instead, in their season-opener against Huntington North, they fought through the adversity of losing starting quarterback, Ryan Wright (12), who is out for quite sometime due to a broken thumb on his throwing hand. "The broken thumb is definitely a big disappointment for me," said Wright. "But the doctor has told me that I probably could get back in action sooner than expected."

Wright had been planning on taking over under center this season after the departure of Jordan Wise, along with a very deep senior class. But in the days counting down to the season-opener Wright suffered a broken thumb, putting him on the sidelines for an expected four weeks. In the meantime, last year's starting JV quarterback, Logan Laughlin (11), has been named starting quarterback until Wright is healthy enough to get back in action. "I was shocked when I learned I was going to be starting," said Laughlin. "I hadn't had as many reps as Wright had, and definitely not as much experience."

Laughlin had also expressed that after the first full day of practice, his teammates made him feel much more comfortable with running the offense.

Coach Chad Zolman was also obviously disappointed with Wright's injury, but quoted that "things like that happen, its football, we have to deal with it and move on." With Laughlin now the starter, the play book has been tweaked to be able to fit his abilities so that he can be successful.

"Every off-season you have to make some adjustments to the play book. You go by what personnel you have," said Zolman. "Losing such a talented senior class like last year's will definitely make the play book for this year look a little different."

In the season-opener against Huntington North, the Spartans were looking to keep their winning streak going, defeating the Vikings 19 consecutive years. In the opening minutes, the Spartans took a 6-0 lead. But, unable to convert drives into points, the Spartan offense stalled the rest of the first half and most of the second half. Huntington North, on the other hand, was able to take a lead going into the half. A roller coaster second half that saw no scoring until late in the fourth quarter made the game interesting. A touchdown run by Charles Seals (12) and a successful two-point conversion deadlocked the game at 14. The Vikings answered quickly putting up another touchdown, to lead by seven. The Spartans could not get down field and tie the ball game in hopes of overtime, thus leading to the school's first loss to Huntington North since 1988, by a score of 14-21. Laughlin was impressive though in his first start, completing nine of ten passes without any interceptions.

"Before the game I wanted to stay under the radar, just focus on not messing up," said Laughlin. "As the game went on I got used to the game speed and got much more relaxed. I was upset by the loss and the history behind it, but we lost by seven and for me only having limited practices I think that was pretty good."

Coach Zolman also felt the same way towards Laughlin's performance in the game against Huntington North, saying he has much confidence that he will do well as the season progresses.

As for Wright, he felt having to watch the game from the sidelines was "very boring" and wanted to be out there with his teammates.

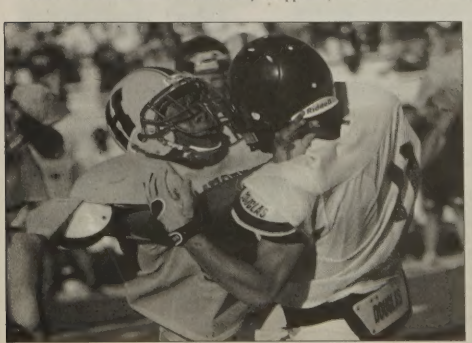
The Spartans second game was their home-opener against Warsaw. On a very stormy, rainy night, many thought the game might get postponed.

"After playing in the first game against Huntington North, it definitely helped me in the second game against Warsaw," said Laughlin. "I knew what to expect."

The Spartans opened up the game on a tear. Laughlin threw for a pair of touchdown passes along with another touchdown added by Seals. In all, the Spartans scored 31 first quarter points. Those 31 points would be all the team would need, as the game was called off at halftime making them victorious, 31-0 in a shortened game. "Throwing my first touchdown pass was exciting, but then I came back to my senses and had to make sure we got the win," said Laughlin on his first touchdown pass.

As for the rest of the season, the team has the same goals and expectations that they did the first day of summer. Laughlin's main goal as he takes over as quarterback is just to win. Winning now will help him in his senior year with experience. When Wright returns, he wants to repeat what the team was able to do last year, and go even further. Adversity has not crumbled this Spartan team; instead it has made them stronger and has given them more experience for the upcoming seasons.

PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER



Left: Charles Seals (12) blocks for Ross Heckber (12) at a scrimmage against Snider. Right: Tracey Hathaway (12) runs in pursuit of tackling an opposing team member.

Homecoming Game

Tonight at 7pm against Columbia City

Boys soccer aims for state

Young team rallies around senior leadership; coach

By Andrew Weiss
Writer

After a losing record last year, the boys' varsity soccer team felt they have something to prove. "We have some high goals set for this year," starting defenseman, Jacob Schmidt (12) said.

Those high goals will be accomplished by focusing on the little things.

"We want to go undefeated, not allow any conference goals, and outscore our opponents with a 4 to 1 ratio," Tom Gallmeyer (11) said, "We want to take one step further this year and make it all the way to state."

"We want to take one step further this year and make it all the way to state."

Tom Gallmeyer (11)
Forward

The team started the season on the earliest day that state rules would allow them, holding tryouts on August 3. After team tryouts, Coach Paco Castillo held a three week camp to get the players' endurance back to where it should be for the season. Castillo also taught basic soccer fundamentals at the camp. The team then had ten preseason games, each with two 30 minute halves, against other teams in the state.

The team has big shoes to fill with leading scorer Mike Cobb, starting goalie Tyler Lambert, and defenseman Joe Salisbury all graduating.

However, Castillo is not concerned about the team's loses.

"This year's team is a lot better than last year's team because most of our starters are returning and that year of experience will help this team succeed," Castillo said.

If the team were to make it to state, they will have to beat a lot of tough competition on the road there.

"Carmel is the number one team in the state," Schmidt said. "Most of the team agrees that Carroll and Canterbury will be tough games for us to win too."

"We are out to beat Canterbury," Gallmeyer said. "We have a huge rivalry with them. Last year before our game against them, they spray painted their school logo on our home field. It's always going to be a battle with them."

Most, if not all the players, believe the team leader is defenseman, Joe Stoffel (12).

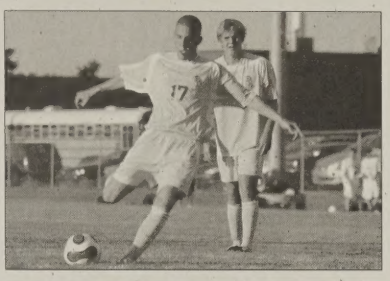
"Joe has played varsity every year at Homestead," Gallmeyer said. "He leads with his words and with his play on the field during practice and games." Because Stoffel plays defense, he will be a big part of helping the team accomplish one of their goals: to not allow any goals against in-conference opponents.

Although Stoffel may be the leader and captain of the team, other players do not have to look far for inspiration. The team has six seniors: Stoffel, Schmidt, Josh Krutchten (12), John Seybert (12), Eric Mendenhall (12), and Chris Gerber (12).

Castillo, in his fifth year as Homestead's coach, will have a lot to do with the team's success this season. "I've played for [Castillo] for all four years of my soccer career here at Homestead, he's a very good coach and really knows what he's talking about," said Schmidt.

"[Castillo] is a great person to be around, as well as a good coach," said Gallmeyer. "He has really helped me improve my game." Gallmeyer has had Castillo for a coach every year of high school, along with a year of middle school.

Overall, the team should have success with all of their experienced players, and two freshmen that dress on this year's team.



Left: Brent Helton (11) holds off opposing defense in a recent game against Belmont.
Top: Chris Gerber (12) skirts around a defender in a recent game.
Middle: Kegan Harkenrider (10) shoots in the recent Belmont game.
Bottom: Jocob Schmidt (12) dribbles down the field in a recent game.

Girls soccer let down after big win

By Kara Busse
Writer

After a long summer of sprints, stairs, and tough cuts, the girls' varsity soccer team has been put together with all new players, strengths, and weaknesses, when compared to last year.

"We are able to do really well this year. We just need to work on things like finishing our opportunities and putting our opponents away early," Abby Paul (11) said.

"I really think we have our eyes on state this year," Hopi Castillo (12) said.

The girls' started out their season ranked 14th in the state. They then went into the Snider Invitational playing Canterbury, ranked 8th in Indiana, beating the Lady Cavaliers 3-0 with two goals scored by Castillo and one by Kellie Julius (11).

The girls' finished out the invitational continuing their winning streak on the following Friday by playing Fishers High School and winning 4-1.

The first game played on the home pitch was the girls' team versus Columbia City. With a rough first half, only up 2-0, the team had a long talk with Coach Jason Lee and went out during the second half picking up the intensity and scoring ten more goals. This focus left the Eagles reeling from a 12-0 loss.

The girls' game against Columbia City preceded possibly the biggest game on the team's schedule this season, the match against number one state ranked, two-time defending state champion, Bishop Dwenger. It had been nearly two years since the Saints lost a single game, but the Lady Spartans turned the tide Wednesday, August 29.

It was a tough battle throughout every minute of the game. While most spectators expected the number one team to comfortably walk away with the win, the Saints began to rattle when the score of the game remained 0-0 at the end of the first forty minutes.

More and more shots started coming off the underdogs and one finally went in. A free kick about 35 yards out from Shannon Collins (12) hit the cross bar of the goal and paved the way for Nicole Musi (10), who crashed the goal, to head the ball in the back of the net for the winning goal in the sixty-ninth minute of the game.

"We just need to work on things like finishing our opportunities and putting our opponents away early."

Abby Paul (11)
Defense

"We played well enough against Dwenger to win, but there was still a lot we could have done better," Paul said.

Following the big game, the team headed down to Zionsville for a showcase to play some teams outside of the Fort Wayne area. The weekend didn't go exactly as the girls' had hoped or planned.

"I think that big win against [Bishop] Dwenger really affected our play. We were coming off a really big high and not on the top of our game," Paul said.

Losses to a team from Kentucky 1-2 and Zionsville 0-1, and a win in the final game on Saturday against Munster 2-1 signaled the end of the showcase.

"We aren't just waiting for things to happen this year. We are really going to show people we aren't a joke," Castillo said.

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New senior leadership is looking ahead

By Kalyn Jorgensen
Writer

After a successful 2006 volleyball season, this year's model will have a completely new image. With the loss of seven seniors from last year's team, the lady Spartans are hoping the senior leadership of Becky Price (12) and Ashley Torres (12) will lead the team to a victorious season.

"It's kind of cool being a senior, but at the same time it's a lot of responsibility. I'm also the captain so I need to take a big leadership role and do what is needed for the team," Price said.

Although Torres is an upperclassman, she has not participated in Homestead volleyball for all four years. She played her freshman and sophomore year, but did not make the team as a junior.

"Even though I didn't make it last year I decided to try out again because I knew the team had spots open. I really enjoy playing and didn't want to regret not trying out," Torres said.

The team drastically changed this season due to losing and gaining new players. The team lost five juniors who decided not to try out for personal reasons. Taylar Meeks, Courtney Mrowczynski, Kristen Kinzer, Melissa Harber, and Kalyn Jorgensen had all played for the team for the past two years. Meeks is continuing to pursue her love of volleyball after transferring to Canterbury Mrowczynski moved to Arizona and is playing middle hitter on her school's varsity team. Kinzer, Harber, and Jorgensen decided not to play so they could focus on other sports.

"At the beginning of summer I went to conditioning and planned on trying out, but then decided that I would rather concentrate on softball and play year round," Harber said.

The new changes to the varsity roster also include two girls who transferred from other schools. Nicole Szoko (11) and Jasmine Thomas (11) are both setters for the team. Szoko came from Howell High School, located in Howell, Michigan.

"I really like the team so far. All the girls get along great, and I have learned so many things from playing for Homestead that I would have never learned otherwise. We push each other to play our best and we motivate each other so much," Szoko said.

Being such a young and new team, the girls have faced a few struggles.

"I think our biggest struggle right now is staying mentally focused. A lot of teams have trouble with this. Once we lose a point we tend to let it distract us instead of shrugging it off and keeping our focus in order to fight harder during the next rally," Sarah Huguenard said.

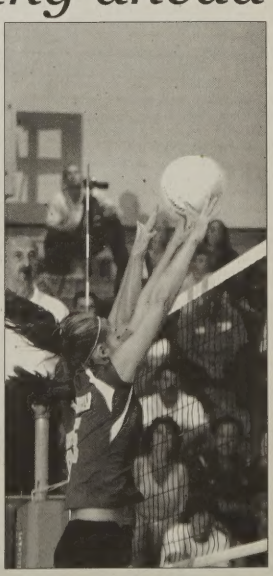
Currently the team has played six games. They have lost to Bishop Luers, Concordia, Concord, Elmhurst, and Bishop Dwenger, but they defeated Wayne.

"While our record is only 1-5, we are getting better every time we play," Huguenard (11) said.

The team's upcoming games includes Marion, Snider, and the Bellmont Invitational.

As the season progresses the team hopes to come out on top. They have goals of winning conference and sectionals, and they know that it will take a lot of work.

"I think our team this year has a lot of potential. It started off a little rocky because we're an all new varsity team, with the exception of two people," Torres said. "We've finally started to click and we have a good chance this year come conference and sectional time."



Left: Emily Mungovan (10) after setting the ball at a recent home match.
Above: Jacquee Bowman (11) blocking a shot at a recent home match.

Do heroes still exist?

Nick Arnold
Sports Editor

At some point in life almost everyone has admired a professional athlete. They command the attention of the public unlike any other figure. As the best of the best in their respective fields, top athletes in our modern society enjoy a lifestyle many can only dream of.

This stature leads people to do just that, dream. Since we were young, we dreamed of hitting home runs like Ken Griffey Jr., or sinking fade-aways like Michael Jordan. Their accomplishments are forever etched in our mind, serving as a reminder of our own ambitions and goals. In fact, athletes have so much influence that they even control our thought processes.

Almost everyone knows someone who tried to do everything like a popular athlete. They wear the same clothes, walk like them, talk like them, even though they probably don't play a sport like them. Children look up to them as heroes, as super-humans living among us.

Unfortunately, these superhuman figures are, in reality, not so superhuman after all. They are limited by the nature of the human body and a desire to be better than their peers. And like the rest of us, they are tempted to cheat.

Though no one wants to believe it, athletes do, indeed, cheat. Most importantly, they cheat by scientifically enhancing their own bodies. Thanks to a rapidly advancing world of medicine, athletes in virtually every sport can gain an unfair advantage over their competition. From weightlifting to swimming, chemical substances can alter the human body in order to enhance performance. And if the temptation is there, you can bet someone will take advantage of it.

The sports section of any newspaper today is not complete without some allegation of doping. It has worked its way into almost every sport in some shape or form. And because it has become so widespread, it is looked upon as being normal. The sheer volume of allegations has simply overwhelmed sports fans.

No one can even begin to count the number of Major League Baseball players accused of involvement in some steroid ring. One by one, top players like Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire, and Jason Giambi are knocked off their pedestals like dominos. Bonds' career has become so tainted, that his records will forever be in question. He will go down in history not only as a record-holder, but as one of many who choose the wrong path to glory.

As if the constant stream of baseball allegations wasn't enough, professional cycling's stature has once again hit a new low. Within the current decade, their have been allegations tied to three Tour de France champions alone. Most recently in 2006, the inspiring story of American Floyd Landis became just another criminal investigation. This summer's Tour de France was no different and in many ways, was worse. Alexandre Vinokourov, the pre-race favorite, was sent packing after failing a blood test during the race. With Vinokourov gone, Michael Rasmussen gained the Yellow Jersey, and lost it in the same fashion. Accused of providing his whereabouts for drug-testing, Rasmussen was booted from the sport.

Just like so many Tours in the past, cycling fans around the world began to idolize a rider and then were left in shock. A rider can go from a nobody, to a champion, and then to a coward in little under a month.

Not even the great Lance Armstrong is immune from doping rumors. And with Armstrong's main competitors, Jan Ullrich and Ivan Basso, being convicted of doping, one has to wonder if the seven-time Tour de France winner really was clean like he insists. Can someone really dope and still fail to beat someone who supposedly does not?

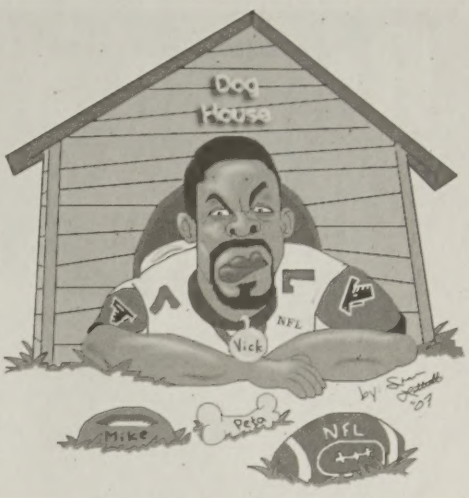
Much to the sports fan's disgust, illegal substances have leaked into a sport that has always been considered untainted. Sparked by the comments of Gary Player, it appears that steroids have found a place in golf. When golf comes to mind, steroids are almost never a part of the picture. But this new association between the gentlemen's game and cheating may become a fixture of the sport.

Player claims that ten of the top fifty golfers in the world are using illegal substances. The temptation may be greater in golf than almost any other sport, where no steroid policies are in place. Golf's governing bodies are scrambling to institute testing, but the unthinkable still remains unknown.

With the rampant use of steroids throughout sports, many fans remain in serious doubt of athlete's accomplishments. Any achievement brings to mind the possibility of cheating. We wonder if our children will have any moral individuals to look up too. Modern sports have entered into a slide with no end in sight. It is this loss of credibility that makes us wonder, do true heroes still exist?

Dear Mr. Vick,

Chris Ray
Sports Editor



Congratulations! You really dug yourself into a hole this time. On Monday, August 27 you finally pleaded guilty to federal dog-fighting charges, and on Monday, December 10, you will be sentenced to one to five years in the "dog house." If I'm not mistaken, it was not long ago that you were on top of the world as a premier NFL quarterback for the Atlanta Falcons. I guess the "dog days" of summer really got to you.

Let's review. This is not the first rough patch in your career, am I right? Back in November, after the New Orleans Saints dominated your team 31-13, you thought it necessary to let the Atlanta fans know how you really felt by flipping them the bird. And that's not it. January was also a bumpy stretch of your life, as your water bottle was confiscated at Miami International Airport due to the distinct smell of marijuana and a substance found in a secret compartment on the bottle. Although you were not convicted of any crime, the run-in with the law was supposed to put you on the right track, correct? Off the mark again. I guess you really can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Now it's alleged that you not only financed a six year old dogfighting business, Bad Newz Kennels, but you also took part in killing the pit bulls who didn't "succeed in the fights," which were held in the backwoods of one of your properties in Surry County, Virginia. And you didn't just kill the dogs, you brutally murdered them. For an unsuccessful fight, you drowned, hanged, or electrocuted the canine. These actions will cost you 7-35 dog years in prison. Those are some years those pit bulls wish they had back.

You used to have it all, Mike. You were the number one pick in the 2001 NFL draft, bringing hope to the Atlanta Falcon franchise. You led the team to the NFC Conference Championship in 2005, and you are the only quarterback in NFL history to rush for over 1,000 yards in a season. The jersey you wear on Sundays was the highest selling jersey in the NFL, three Pro-Bowl appearances, the cover art to Madden 2005, and one of the largest contracts in NFL history at $120 million over ten years are all credited to your name.

However, I have some "Bad Newz" for you. You lost it all. You "screwed the pooch," so to say. Because you and your fellow "dawgs" had to fight with pit bulls, you fell off of your mountaintop. Already, your teammates are referring to you as an "ex-teammate" and you have even lost your family's support when they testified against you in court. But don't let that get you down. You will have plenty of time to think about it over the next few years.

My advice to you? Get in, do your time, and get out. You were a role model to many kids and you were a phenomenal player on Sundays. The last thing you need, Mr. Vick, is for this case to be the defining moment in your life. Try to use this to make you a better man, because it looks like you need some practice. And don't worry, if you don't succeed in changing your image, nobody will be there to drown, hang, or electrocute you, because that's just sick, is it not?

New golfers freshen up team

Girls begin on new course with new leader

Derek Luttrell
Writer

Its like being a big sister, without the dolls and make-up. Instead, its swing techniques and competitive advice.

Kelley Dickmeyer (12), who is one of the very few senior golfers, has high expectations as the team looks up to her for guidance and leadership.

"It's kind of nice not having a lot of seniors this year," Dickmeyer said. "It makes things easier for the girls to know who they can come to, and that's a good feeling for me."

With a relatively new course and the absence of a median between extreme heat and downpour rain for the past few weeks, it has been everything but easy for the team to get together and prepare for the upcoming matches.

"The storm on Monday and Tuesday really took a toll on our performance. Since the whole team was busy and unable to practice the previous weekend, it made [for] four days without any kind of practice. We were definitely unprepared for our match following the storms," Dickmeyer siad.

The 2007 season marks the girls' second year at Orchard Ridge Country Club. Although past years have been played at Chestnut Hills, Dickmeyer said that "since the team is so young, Orchard Ridge is really the only course they have come to know."

When asked about the course, Coach Michelle Swing said, "[t]here isn't anything bad about the course. The new management has been extremely helpful and courteous, and we have had no problems with them or with the course."

> *"With the youthfulness of the girls, I just want to take small steps and observe tournament to tournament to see if we are improving; and we have been"*
>
> **Michelle Swing**
> Girls Golf Coach

With the loss of several stars from last year, such as '07 graduate Jessica Sciortino, it could be assumed that the team is expected to perform well and make up for these losses. When asked about the hopes she had for the team this season, Swing mentioned that "this is really the first season where we haven't really set a bar for our goals as a team."

One key player that came ready for the challenge of helping to carry the team along was Lauren Wesner (11), who is playing at a senior level and sitting comfortably in the number one spot on the team.

"Playing with the seniors has been fun and challenging," Wesner said. As expected, pressure has been added onto Wesner's performance by others, but by herself as well.

"I always want to be a better player, but by having a year less experience than everyone you're playing with makes it difficult, since they expect you to be as good as they are" Wenser said.

"With the youthfulness of the girls, I just want to take small steps and observe tournament to tournament to see if we are improving; and we have been," Swing said.

Kelley Dickmeyer (12) follows through on her swing.

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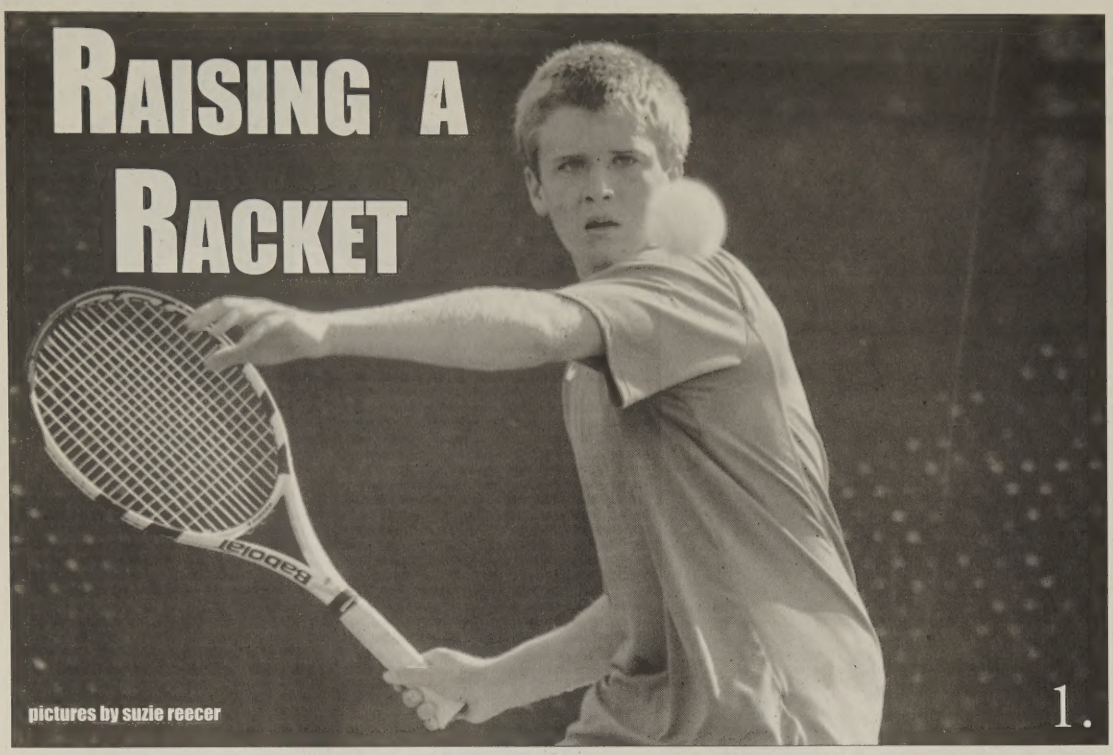
Raising a Racket



By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

In his first year at number one singles, Danny Reecer (12) showed promising results last Saturday at the Homestead Round Robin. The varsity tennis team played well at the tournament as they have continued to live up to high expectations, expectations that are part of Homestead tennis. However, this year is different with four underclassmen on varsity, the loss of four seniors, new positions played by almost all of the varsity players, and the exit of two varsity level players in the last two years.

"Going into the match I thought I was going to get killed. I had nothing to lose so I just played my best because I wasn't nervious," Reecer said.

Reecer defeated Derek Carpenter (12) of South Side High School in a long three set match. Carpenter went to semi-state last year for singles, and finished third place in state after beating Zach Ervin (12) of Delta High School. Reecer ripped crosscourt winners on the run to take the first set seven to five, but fell in the second set five to seven. A super tiebreak, ten point tie break, was held instead of a full third set. The entire tennis team watched the two exchange points until Reecer was finally able to take the third set thirteen to eleven. The victory received a long ovation from the crowd, but was most unexpected after Reecer's performance in the first round.

At the Round Robin, the varsity team played Lawrence Central, South Side, and Delta. The team beat Lawrence Central four to one. Reecer went up a quick five to zero in the first set, but then lost seven straight games to lose the first set five to seven. Reecer then lost the second set two to six. Angered by his performance, Reecer smashed the ball over the fence, which was rumored to land on the Freshman Academy roof. Geoff Norton (12) and Austin Overlander (9) were penalized one point for the conduct. However, they went on to win their match in the third set.

> *"We have lots of good players, lots of young players, and we get better every week."*
> **Jim Clark**
> Boys Tennis Coach

In the second round, Homestead had a dominating victory five to zero over Southside, including Reecer's win over Carpenter. After the difficult second round, Reecer chose to sit out against Ervin in the match against Delta. Brian White (10), the highest ranked JV player, stepped in for Reecer at one singles. The varsity tennis team lost to Delta two to three; losing in one singles and both one and two doubles. Conner Andrews (9) and Michael Zurcker (10) at two and three singles, respectively, were able to finish the day undefeated. The varsity team finished the Round Robin 2-1.

"I am used to playing singles, but last year I had to adapt to playing one doubles. Playing one singles this year is what I have been working for my whole life, and it's fun to play the tough competition every week," Reecer said.

Almost all of the varsity players are in a different position than last year. Reecer is playing number one singles this year, the highest position on varsity. Last year, Reecer played number one doubles with Josh Rifkin ('07), and now is filling the position that was played by Cameron Huffman ('07) last year. This year's varsity tennis team includes Reecer, Norton, Zurker, Mauk, Andrews, Caleb Cook (11), and Jordan Mauk (9).

"We have a little bit of a question mark this year because of the fact that we are so young. We have lots of good players, lots of young players, and we get better every week. But we don't know how good we are going to be," Coach Jim Clark said.

The competitiveness of high school tennis is dramatically different for the freshmen who are playing their first year of high school tennis. Clark believes that one of the main differences is being an individual versus a team, and said that for 48 weeks tennis players are individual but for seven they are on a team.

"[High school tennis] is more structured, and you have to go to practice every day where as before it was just two to three times a week," Mauk said.

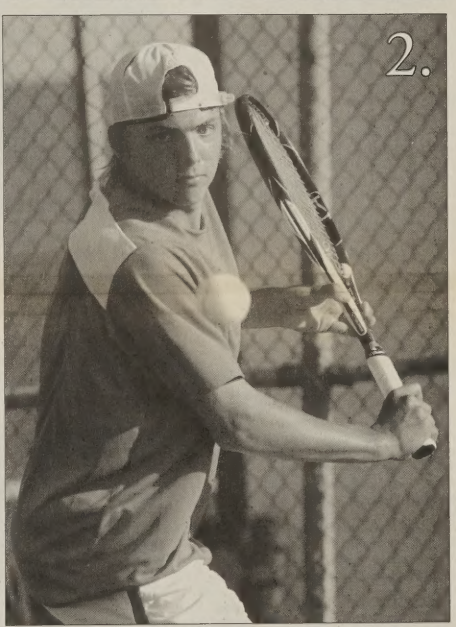
Mauk, Andrews, and Overlander have all had years of experience playing tennis prior to this year. Mauk, over the last few years, has competed in several tournaments in La Porte, and at Wild Wood and Pine Ridge raquet clubs in order to prepare for high school tennis. These freshmen, along with Cook, a transfer from Yorktown, have filled up the four positions from last years seniors.

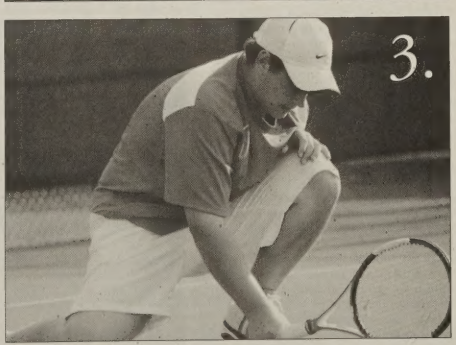
Last Thursday, the varsity team had a difficult time beating DeKalb, although they won 5-0. Zurker won at number three singles, six to one in the third set after losing the second set in a tiebreak. Norton and Overlander won the first set six to three, but fell in the second set five to seven, in number one doubles. The two came back to win the match in the third set six to two. Andrews also won his match in a tight third set.

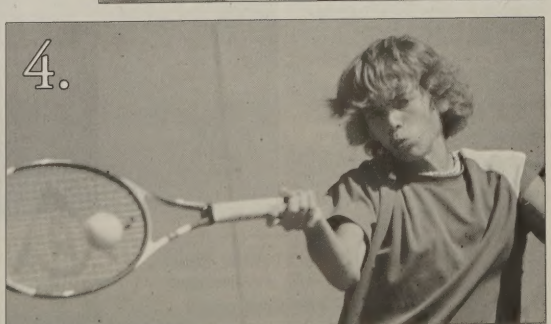
In the last two years, two varsity level tennis players have chosen to leave the team. This year, Rahul Gupta (12) left and Nick Myers (12) left as a junior last year. Gupta declined to comment on his departure.

"I was very disappointed with [Gupta] not wanting to stay on the team because at that point we had not made any decisions on who would be on varsity," Clark said. "He had commitments and if he could not get a guaranteed spot on varsity, then he needed to focus on some other things."

The second of the two losses the varsity tennis team had was against Park Tudor, ranked third in the state this year. Last year's varsity team lost to Park Tudor in the state finals. Despite the various issues facing the varsity team, they have a record of 5-2. Next week, the team faces several tough matches including eleventh ranked Culver Academy on Wednesday, and seventh ranked Floyd Central on Friday.







1. Danny Reecer (12) keeping his eye on the ball during a successful singles match at Park Tudor
2. Connor Andrews (9) preparing to hit a ball during a match at home vs. DeKalb
3. Geoff Norton (12) staring at the ground in disappointment after his defeat at Park Tudor
4. Caleb Cook (11) concentrating while he makes contact with the ball vs. South Side at home
5. Austin Overlander (9) straining his arm to reach a ball during a home match vs. South Side

issue 2 volume 38
homestead high school
4310 homestead road
fort wayne, indiana 46814

the Spartana

Painter Boys
Margaret Dasler and Suzie Reeder capture the spirit of the Painter Boys during home football games. Photos on page 8A

Friday, September 28, 2007

OBESITY HITS HOME

Staff, students notice weighty issue, adaptions made to lunch options

HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR BMI

[insert your height]

inches

[insert your weight]

pounds

2.2 pounds = 1 kilogram
1 inch = 0.0254 meters

BMI = kg/m²

underweight less than 18.5
normal weight 18.5 - 24.9
overweight 25 - 29.9
obesity 30 or higher

By Meghan McArdle
Writer

Teen obesity is a pandemic no teen or adult can deny. Schools nationwide are now faced with students dealing with weight issues, such as being overweight or obese. The two terms are often used interchangeably, but medically they are two different conditions. Teens are considered overweight if their Body Mass Index (BMI) is 85-95% as compared to teens of the same age and gender. Teens are considered obese if their BMI is above 95% as compared to other teens of their same age and gender. Now, many schools have decided to combat the weighty issues head on.

"In today's society, it has become more acceptable to be heavier. Before the seventies it was something people hid or changed about themselves, whereas now people just kind of accept it as normal. With the convenience revolution came the obesity revolution," Beth Quigley, school nurse, said.

According to TeenHealth.com one-third of all kids between the ages of two and nineteen are considered overweight or obese in America.

"Obesity and being overweight seems to be on the rise in recent years. Yet it also seems like it is a constantly repeating cycle: overweight, too skinny, overweight," Alex Bueker (10) said.

In recent years our own school has made strides to offer more nutritionally balanced lunches, as well as removing both the backroom and athletic snacks. Yet through all of the school's attempts at better nutrition, there are still many questions surrounding just how effective the attempts will be.

"I think the closing of the backroom could help cut-down on some diet problems, but I doubt the removal of athletic snacks will because athletes are generally active and are already making healthy life choices," Jenny Green (11) said.

School only constitutes seven hours out of a student's day, so there is still a large amount of a day in which students can make choices leading to poor nutrition.

"If people aren't getting the bad food while they are at school, they are probably getting it somewhere else." Teri Grimes (12) said. "Sometimes the food they are getting outside of school is, in fact, worse."

Within the obesity pandemic, there is a large debate over whether genetics or the environments in which we live have a greater affect on how much a person weighs.

SEE OBESITY on page 2A

BRIEFS

SPANISH CLUB
Spanish club will meet every other Thursday in room 606. The next meeting is Thursday September 27th. See Senora Arias or Senor Peeper for more information.

ART CLUB
Art Club will meet every other Tuesday in room 108, and is asking for $5 in dues and a field trip permission slip form. The next meeting will be held on October 2nd. Talk to Mrs. Jones for more information.

HOSPITALITY CLUB
The Homestead Hospitality Club will meet meets every Wednesday in rooms 101 or 102. This club is for anyone who enjoys preparing or serving food and is run by Mrs. Geller. Members must pay $5 and do not have to be in a foods class to join.

NHS T-SHIRT DESIGNS
NHS is asking for t-shirt designs to be turned in by the next meeting.

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Counselors receive national recognition

By Flor Ortega
Writer

Honored for its "comprehensive, data-driven program," Homestead's counseling department recently received nationwide recognition. The department now finds itself among the top counseling programs across the nation, all with the goal to better serve their students.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has awarded the counseling department with its highly valued Recognized ASCA Model Program designation (RAMP) award, an award only given to 32 other high schools in the country.

"RAMP recipients have demonstrated their dedication to serving all students with a comprehensive school counseling program that shows how students are different as a result of what school counselors do," said Carolyn Stone, Ed.D, ASCA president. "This designation not only distinguishes these schools, but it also encourages school counselors nationwide to strive for success."

In 2006, Homestead received the Indiana Gold Star School Counseling Award, which was the first step in winning the RAMP award.

Diane Rice, a school counselor, and Sue Reynolds worked together to reach Gold Star status and, ultimately, received the national RAMP award. Rice felt that the first step was to self-evaluate the program and fill deficits in order to receive the awards.

Students may recall taking several surveys last year that asked questions about what they were having difficulties in. This gave the counseling program a better idea of what it is students need help with so they could make the changes that were necessary.

"The number one thing that troubled our kids was stress. Studying and test-taking skills came in second," Rice said.

Sue Reynolds worked with the state government. (this lady is mentioned evasively, I have no concrete info on who she is or what she did, I'm having Flor get more information that we can add later)

"Our school counselors and administrators at Homestead have worked hard to ensure that students have an outstanding counseling program that meets their academic, career, and citizenship development needs," Superintendent Dr. Brian Smith said. "They are to be commended for their dedication to the young people of this community."

Students and staff hope for future chances to be recognized as an outstanding school.

"The beauty of the achievement is that we were recognized for what the program already had going, there were only a few additions," Rice said. "[The award] says that we are a top-notch program."

Sue Reynolds Excutive Director of the American Student Achievement Institute was responsible for establishing the model program so that every counseling program could follow the standards step by step to achieve award winning status and any weaknesses present could be addressed.

"Sue Reynolds is truly a leader in counseling" Rice said.

making a difference

Recycle your cans and bottles at lunch. It gives Key Club members something to do on Thursdays after meetings.

ISTEP07

Standardized state testing leaves underclassmen at school, allows juniors, seniors to explore options

By Katherine DeRosa
News Editor

Although the value of standardized testing remains to be determined, Indiana continues to measure the academic achievements of third through tenth graders with the ISTEP. Administered each fall, the exam is designed by the Indiana Department of Education to ensure that students understand basic language and science skills. ISTEP has the greatest affect on sophomores, who are required to pass the test in order to graduate. If sophomores do not pass the exam, they must retake it their junior and possibly senior year, until completed successfully. ISTEP week results in an altered schedule, which provides students who have previously passed the exam an opportunity to participate in a job-shadow or college visit.

Most students are not strongly impacted by the three-day exam. "I didn't really prepare for it," Josie Nussbaum (10) said. "I just showed up."

The Indiana Department of Education claims that getting a good night's sleep is the key to performing your best on the test. Therefore, teachers of freshman and sophomore students are prohibited from teaching new material or assigning homework, the entire week ISTEP is administered.

The exam is given over a period of three consecutive days, in approximately three-hour blocks of time. Students often claim that keeping their focus throughout the exam is the most difficult part. "I try to get a good night's sleep and eat a good breakfast because most of the stuff we need to know we already learned," Macie Herman (10) said.

The ISTEP, unlike other standardized tests such as the SAT, is designed to measure basic skills. The Indiana Department of Education has determined that these skills are the basic requirements for high school graduates. The ISTEP differs from the SAT, which measures aptitude and reasoning ability.

All teachers are forced to alter their lesson plans to make room for the ISTEP week. Some, however, incorporate ISTEP preparation into their lesson plans. "I [prepared] for ISTEP by doing the ISTEP prep essays in Language," Ashlee Larkey (9) said.

The week has a different affect on upperclassmen. On Tuesday students were encouraged to job-shadow an adult or go on a college visit. Most

SEE ISTEP on page 2A

SACS

"...To make a difference"

The SACS Internet use policy restricts access to this web page at this time.

By Ian Strelec
Writer

The SACS Internet use policy restricts access to this web page at this time. This red-bordered screen has interrupted students while they are looking for comics, playing games or actually doing research. But how much is actually known about it?

Blocked Web sites are generally determined by the school administration with requests from teachers, or even parents, being considered. However, a student can be restricted from a Web site if it contains a banned phrase.

"The system counts up a score based on banned phrases and things, and if the page exceeds them, it blocks it," said Don Chase, Director of Technology. "Some topics can even come up on news pages and things, which is what causes the problems a lot of kids have with things like CNN and such."

Certain educational sites were also added to the banned Web site list, including Wikipedia, which is a source of controversy among students and teachers.

"Banning Wikipedia was a far stretch in my book … [but] I suppose I can understand that the school would ban it because of overuse of a source that is 'not' credible," Adam Sirois (12) said.

Youthrights.org has also been banned by the district, a block that has spurred laughter from the student body.

"I took a look at the site at home and the site was not offensive in anyway whatsoever, which does have me wondering about how 'legitimate' the school's filter is," Sirois said. "The site is for an organization called the National Youth Rights Association (NYRA), and they are a student run movement for the advancement of youth civil rights. We, as students, need to be aware of what our rights are."

The filters also block flash games that are found at Web sites like Addictinggames.com and Teagames.com. These bans were not created to prevent students from accessing material that is found inappropriate, but for the sake of network speed which runs on a single bandwidth.

"[W]hen you've got a student using a flash game or something in one of the labs, they're using up bandwidth students could be using for more educational purposes somewhere else in the building," Mark East, Network and Technology supervisor, said.

Much of the reasoning behind the system currently in place is based in the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA). After Congress failed twice to pass bills that restricted material available on the internet, the Supreme Court approved the CIPA as a means for protecting minors without infringing upon the First Amendment.

Contrary to popular belief, the librarians are not in control of the system. That job is given to the district's Computer, Media and Technology (CMT) staff, who oversee the daily operations of the district's voice and data systems.

SEE INTERNET on page 2A

OBESITY Continued from page 1A

"Genetics plays the role in how much a person weighs to the affect that it determines the number of fat cells that your body has, yet it is a person's choice whether they feed the fat cells or not," Quigley said.

"It appears genetics must have a lot to do with a person's weight. Many people look like their parents and if the child's overweight generally the parents are as well," Grimes said.

All is not lost though as the obesity pandemic continues to rage, with greater technological and medical advancements, as well as more proactive teens, some treatments can be utilized. Schools can take even greater charge then they have been if they are truly committed and students can take steps towards healthier lifestyles.

"To stay healthy, I like to play soccer and eat properly. I also don't drink pop at all, because you really don't need it and it is very bad for you," Kyle Green (9) said.

"In our cafeteria fifty percent of the food has to be qualified as nutritious, but the biggest thing the school could do to take steps towards combating obesity would be to get rid of the deep-fryers altogether. Also, maybe reduce the amount of foods with refined sugars and corn syrup in them," Quigley said.

For students with questions on weight issues and how to get help, they can contact their family physician, stop in and see Mrs. Beth Quigley after school, or check out websites such as TeenHealth.com and Mayoclinic.com.

ISTEP Continued from page 1A

upperclassmen took advantage of one of these opportunities, however few made specific plans before-hand. "What's on September 18?... I might job shadow with my friend," Ashley Wyss (11) said.

Statistically, Homestead's ISTEP scores have been fairly consistent. Homestead students score roughly in the 90th percentile each year, setting the school's average well above the state's. The passing rate for Homestead's class of 2009 as sophomores was 86%. This is a 5% drop from the class of 2008. The reason for the drop is unknown but some speculate that the exam itself could be getting more difficult. Others believe that the class of 2008 is simply "smarter" than 2009's.

As long as Indiana continues to require ISTEP testing, a pause in the curriculum will be made.

INTERNET Continued from page 1A

Most students have had issues with the system at one time or another.

"Teachers should be given a password to override the filters if necessary," David Ramsey (11) said. "It would make it far easier to get into obviously educational sites being blocked by a stray banned phrase."

From a teacher's perspective, the situation is much the same.

"Sometimes, the system will find a 'banned combination phrase' on a site that I know is educational, but might discuss a controversial topic such as racism or censorship," said Scott Hill, an English teacher.

New deans find role in school

Tony Metcalfe

Jeff Kintz

it's not our paper. it's yours. give us feedback at

thespartana@gmail.com

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECHT

Homecoming Queen Kate Taylor and King Zach Hamil smile after being given their titles.

HOMECOMING
KING & QUEEN
SEPTEMBER 7, 2007

letter to the editor

I was welcomed back into Homestead a sophomore, feeling rather well, mixed feelings really. It took me until lunch by the first day to put my finger on it, "By the gods! This place has changed!"

Firstly, the closed lunches simply don't appease us who were here last year; even back in Summit we could go somewhere else after lunch. And I can reason with the security 'issues' but since when has security been an issue? Unless I've been secretly living under a rock I have not heard nor seen any issues with our open lunches last year. In fact last year was just grand. Cell phones were dealt with swiftly and they really didn't seem like that big of a deal. And perhaps the most missed of all; we could eat our lunches in peace. Waiting in the overly long lines and consuming our deliciousness without constantly having a cop-like figure telling us to pick up our trash was truly a something we took for granted. We could laugh louder and enjoy our little reindeer games like most teens virtually unmolested.

So what happened to my one 'golden' year? I could understand if maybe we had a lot of issues last year and we needed some new rules to help alleviate issues. But really, when's it going to end? I honestly would have little to no surprise if next year I'm greeted with armed lunch monitors and hearing something like this for reasoning:

"Well we added a personal militia of machine-gun toting super soldiers to patrol the hallways for student safety" or something along those lines. Since when are we in such danger anyway? Nothing ever changes in Indiana, more specifically Fort Wayne, nothing happened, we have a fairly happy suburban school. We don't need all these new security measures to have a contest with other high schools on "who can be safer?"

And now I must address the other half of the room which is the student body, the new cell phone monstrosity. They reason that cell phone texting could be used for cheating. Yet most of us see it this as a paranoid precaution, I have yet to see or hear the kid who would say something like:

"Yes, of course, Ill just type out every word of my short answer to my buddy George and then he can get taken off for using 0's and abbreviations."

Personally I cannot think of who in their right mind would text their 'friend' every answer? And isn't it ever so slightly obvious if two guys have the same questions wrong? Or perhaps how the small clickity-clack of cell phone keys is mixed in with the writing of pencils during a test?

Quite honestly, cell phone texting conversations are typically:

1. Between a girl and a guy, arguing which one loves the other more
2. Friends talking about how bored they are
3. Plans for later on that day

As such is nothing more and nothing less, as far as I am aware, that is all.

Now to address drug testing, I personally haven't been tested, which I'm surprised about, yet as soon as I join a club I'll be eligible to get tested, anyone find that ironic?

Some students suspect this 'randomness' is defiantly not true. Reasoning that the SACS network goes down every ten minutes, and yet they can maintain a computer that selects one student from hundreds? No, even I find that hard to believe. Even if that's true, why can't we channel that reliability into benefiting the students enrolled here?

Isn't that what schools are for? I find my creativity has been destroyed by the pale white walls, "it's a prison now," some say and "We aren't allowed to do anything anymore because everything is against the rules."

And on my own personal note, the Mirador is low on funding, very low in fact. They can spend money on a brick sign out front, but can't fund The Mirador? They can hire more than enough administrators and lunch monitors, but they can't fund any student activities or student council?

What is the idea of lunch monitors anyway? Sure we had our fun times last year, but that is no excuse to have the same employee harass us every day about picking up our trash, it's become a timed operation, 10 minutes before lunch is over and we're allowed to stand up, we systematically have 4 monitors walk by our table, commenting on our trash. This is no coincidence this happens every day, the same people, the same time.

And as personal as personal can get, I must simply state, enough with parents and paranoid adults deciding how we should live and learn. I think they should stick with paying the bills, funding our imaginations and actually teaching us. So then in turn we can solve problems they already caused us like global warming, overpopulation, poverty, and environmental issues.

Cam Kaminski (10)

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Opinion

Friday, September 28, 2007

Clashing opinions over troops

Surge proves necessary, delivers results

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

Perhaps the defining legacy of the Bush Presidency, the Iraq war has met with unpopularity at home and has failed to produce stability in Iraq. Sectarian violence still factionalizes the region, more Iraqis and American troops are killed each day, and the political and social climate of Iraq in general is unstable at best. In order to remedy this situation, President Bush has ordered a surge in troop levels in Iraq in order to stabilize Baghdad and Anbar provinces. While this new approach does not guarantee success, the surge must be given a chance to deliver much needed results.

General David Petraeus, the U.S. commander in Iraq, recently went before Congress to address the current state of the war and evaluate the effectiveness of the surge. The "surge" itself refers to 30,000 additional troops that have been sent to Iraq in order to provide the manpower to carry out Petraeus' "clear and hold" strategy for bringing stability to Iraq. In Patraeus' testimony, he cited such statistics as an 80 percent reduction in sectarian violence in Baghdad and a reduction of 50 percent nationwide. Based on these statistics, it is clear that the heightened troop presence has helped to curb the sectarian conflict that could spiral into outright civil war.

Critics of the surge still maintain that until America stands down, the Iraqis cannot stand up for themselves. The Iraq government is still feeble and is still unable to take responsibility for the security of its citizens. Without the U.S. in Iraq, the central government will be unable to sustain itself, the Iraqi police, an already highly sectarian group, will be unable to ensure order, and Iraq will almost certainly spiral into outright civil war. This would create an extremely dangerous situation as other Middle Eastern countries such as Iran would be able to exert influence in the region.

In his testimony to Congress, Petraeus did give indications that the progress seen in Iraq could mean a reduction in troops to their original levels by July of 2008. The troop surge does not imply a permanent elevation in troop levels, but rather is a temporary strategy to pacify Baghdad and the surrounding region. It is essential that sectarian violence be diminished and stability be restored to Iraq if democracy is to have a realistic chance to flourish.

The presence of 30,000 additional troops in Iraq has, so far, delivered promising results and has led to the achievement of military objectives. The troop surge must be allowed opportunity to deliver further results and to put Iraq back on the path to peace. An increased troop presence is essential as it helps to prevent the violence that plagues Iraq. Safety must be assured to the Iraqi people. Once a basic level of safety is assured to the Iraqui people, the country will be able to focus on building a safe and sustainable democratic society of their own.

US troops death toll

More than one third of the American troops killed in Iraq died from improvised bombs (IEDs). This chart shows the 10 most common causes of US troop fatalities since the war began.

CAUSE OF DEATH	TOTAL
IED attack	1,080
General hostile fire	447
Small arms fire	227
Vehicle accident	203
Mortar attack	86
Launched grenade attack	81
Helicopter accident	81
Car bomb	76
Suicide car bomb	54
Ambush	50
Other	618

Data as of Dec. 30, 2006

Are more troops helping to stabilize Iraq?

By Kyle Dolfuss
Writer

With the failure of George W. Bush's surge, putting more troops in Iraq, it has become a necessity to withdraw troops to end the killing of our soldiers and innocent Iraqi civilians. Radical insurgents are purposely targeting not only our soldiers, but also our reporters and our photographers in order to send a message to the United States saying "get out of our country," and we should listen.

In 2003, President Bush had a good feeling that Iraq was in possession of weapons of mass destruction. The Iraqi government wanted time to "prepare" for the UN inspection. A month of inspections went by and what was found? Nothing. Not a single trace of any weapon of mass destruction was discovered.

Now that Nouri al-Maliki has assumed a democratic power of what was under Suddam Hussein's absolute rule and a new transitional government has been put in place, it is time to let Iraq deal with its country's respective problems. Our troops will not add towards stabilizing the country, but instead make the situation worse in Iraq. The Iraqi people want US troops out of their country and the best way for Iraq to stabilize itself is to let the country settle what has become a civil war between Shiite and Sunni Muslims.

More than 800 soldiers have lost a limb and over 1,000 are in treatment for brain injuries. 3,500 men and women have died and about 53,000 more have been wounded. Even as we speak, more soldiers are dying or suffering from sectarian violence. When is the cost too high, President Bush?

The US has spent billions of dollars on this war when that money should have been put to a better use. When Hurricane Katrina destroyed New Orleans in 2005, money from the country's defense budget should have been allocated to help our own citizens by providing food, clothes, and support to the thousands that had their lives ruined. That same money could have also been used to help rebuild the city that was left mangled by the worst natural disaster in our country's history.

The US troops in Iraq are more than just soldiers. They are mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, neighbors, co-workers and friends to those of us who watch in horror at home as the death toll rises each and every day. But these people do not need to worry, a withdrawal is evident as Congress continues to deny funding for the war in Iraq, and after the 2008 Presidential election, several nominees have promised a complete withdrawal by 2009.

Our troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan need to come home now. The fear of Iraqi citizens needs to be appeased and be replaced with a feeling of freedom. Hussein was put to death and a new government was created. The war in Iraq is over, President Bush, send our troops home.

Ed board discusses controversy over homework

Does homework help students prepare for college or is it just an annoyance in high school?

We have all heard that the whole point of high school is to prepare us for college and the real world. We as students are to gain an understanding of ideas and concepts that we can use later in life. This is surely an admirable goal and, for the most part, high school does a good job of introducing these ideas. But can we not learn the concepts and ideas we need without having to do pointless homework?

Whoever invented homework surely did not know the suffering that his or her invention would inflict upon student's world. We know that homework is supposed to reinforce the ideas we learn in class and that it is supposed to give us an opportunity to work through these ideas on our own. But homework, in actuality, fails miserably in this respect. In all classes and all subjects, homework is nothing more than an instrument of annoyance. Students cannot stand it, teachers cannot stand grading it and our parents cannot stand hearing about how much we hate it.

Math is probably the area in which homework is assigned most consistently. It serves a purpose, but the purpose is not to teach concepts. By doing problems for math homework, students simply memorize how to do specific kinds of problems. The concepts behind the problems are lost. Instead of trying to figure out how you will ever use equations in your real life, students are forced to spend their time doing insigificant and boring problems (at least the evens).

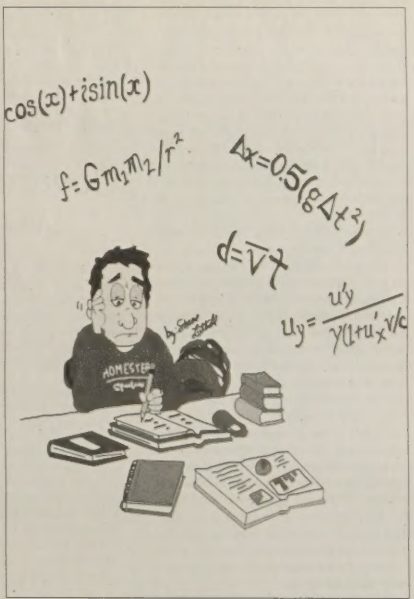
But math is not unique in this respect; across subject areas homework is unnecessary in most cases. That is not to say that studying at home is unnecessary. Students still need to read textbooks and make sure they understand subject matter, but this does not have to be assigned. If students want to do homework, if they think that homework helps them, then those resources must be available. The Editorial Board, however, believes compulsory homework for all students however is a waste of time. If students do not want to do homework, they do not do it. That is not to say they do not get points for it, but they complete their homework in such a way that they do not derive its intended benefit.

Preparation for college is one of the main purposes of high school. But unless students learn to investigate on their own and to be self-motivated to learn, they are ill prepared for the academic rigors of college. Once at college, students will not have packets to hand in or worksheets to complete. Rather, they will be responsible for a given amount of material by a certain date and it is up to the students to prepare themselves. Of course there are professors to teach the material, but outside of class students must be self-sufficient.

Instead of working out concepts individually, students must muddle through assignments and they therefore go to college without the knowledge of how to study for themselves.

This type of personal responsibility for learning is not the same at high school. Of course students must put in time outside of class to learn material, but they are not the architects of their learning. Homework often just gets in the way of letting students study as they see fit. Instead of working out concepts for themselves, students must muddle through assignments and they therefore go to college without the knowledge of how to study for themselves.

Homework will not be removed from our school completely and students will still do countless packets and handouts. The Editorial Board, wishes that this would be so, but will settle hoping that it is at least considered that there are better ways to teach, and probably as importantly, better ways to help students learn how to teach themselves.



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E-mail: thespartana@gmail.com

Tradegy in the Mines

By Kara Hackett
Life Editor

Life is expensive. To achieve, maintain, and even to destroy anything costs people handfuls of their hard-earned cash. In a society based on dollar values, it is easy to see why Americans have a hard time letting go of their loose change, but after hearing about a series of disastrous events that took place in the beginning of August, my opinions on money and the fleeting pleasures it brings have been altered forever.

On Monday, August 6, 2007, the true value of a dollar was put to test when six coal miners in Huntington, Utah, were trapped 1,500 feet below the earth by a cave-in so powerful that it was initially believed to be an earthquake. The men trapped were believed to be about four miles from the cave's entrance; however, in the search for those lost, three rescue workers tragically lost their lives and six more were injured. With three men dead and six still trapped, Americans everywhere began to analyze the question that mine CEO, Robert E. Murray, would have to face: should rescue efforts continue in a mine so dangerous, or should the loved ones of those trapped be forced to live the rest of their lives never knowing if the life their beloved could have been saved?

After struggling with the decision for quite some time while digging a series of holes in the mine to see if there was any survivable space with enough oxygen to support life, Murray has called off all underground search efforts, possibly condemning the trapped miners to death. Unfortunately, we will never know whether or not he made the right decision.

After hearing the story for the first time, one question still throbbed in my mind: why is mine security so lax? Although I have not kept a thorough record of previous mining accidents, I am well aware that this is not first accident of its kind. After looking further into the matter, I discovered that the lack of safety has not been a priority at mines. In fact, the Utah mine which caused such an upset recently has had an accumulative 325 citations against it since January 2004, 116 of which were ruled "significant and substantial," meaning that they were likely to cause injuries. The Utah mine was a ticking time bomb, and the reason why no one defused that bomb was because it interfered with the one thing Americans love most, money.

To Americans, and consequently, mine executives, money is a priority, even more so than safety. Correcting citations from a government that refuses enforce its own regulations until after an accident occurs is not a priority, but rather a gamble that Murray and other mining executives hope to win. Corrections of mining violations are costly, often millions of dollars for one correction, and the American citizens and government have not been willing to pay the price. The number of lives lost to preventable mining accidents continues to rise, and if our government and the mining officials recognize that a mine is unsafe and still allow workers to risk their lives, they are placing the value of a dollar higher on their priority list than the value of a life.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that Americans have three inalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and after hearing that the lives of several victims of mining accidents could have been saved with more financial support, the vulnerability of our right to life struck me. We go to bed each night with the expectation of waking up the next morning, taking for granted the gift that our forefathers bestowed upon us as American citizens. We have seen times in American history when the rights of liberty and the pursuit of happiness have been overlooked by our government, but it is difficult for me to recall a time when our right to live has been threatened. The truth is that the rights of the men buried in the Utah mine were violated. When the government cited those 325 safety violations and refused to act upon their findings, they turned their eyes from the matter, denying the miners of their right to live by knowingly allowing them to work in dangerously unsafe conditions.

If the Federal Government acts on the violations they site, perhaps accidents such as this can be prevented, but everyone is cost-conscious, and the government's citations, if tended to, will be quite costly. To fund the necessary adjustments, there will have to be an increase in pay to the utility companies; thus, triggering an increased cost to the consumer, which would be met with furious rebellion because no one wants to pay more for electricity, and who can blame them.

Today's world is full of price tags, and the prices seem to keep rising, along with the value of money. People are always willing to recognize that life is expensive in a material sense, but what they often take for granted is that life itself is the most priceless treasure they will ever own. The true value of a life can be measured in money or memories, the choice is yours.

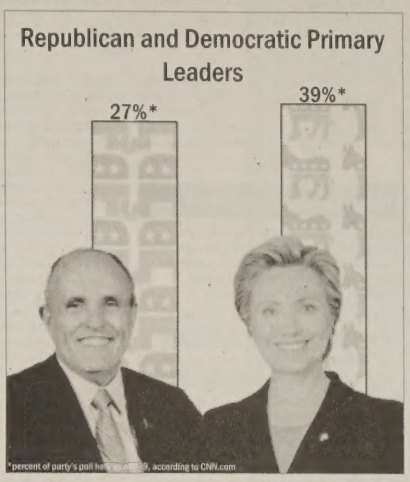
Unfortunately, mining officials have not renounced the possibility of reusing this mine that claimed the lives of nine men, but hopefully, soon Americans across the entire country will put an end to their love affair with money, and material goods and rule out the possibility of another tragic accident such as the mining disaster on August 6, 2007.

Race in '08 heats up

Presidential hopefuls seek party nominations

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

As the 2008 Presidential Race begins to heat up, Homestead students are not unaffected. Upperclassmen especially should pay attention as they will be able to vote for the first time in '08. Many students however are unfamiliar with the leading contenders for both major parties. Whether it is as a refresher or an introduction, it is important to know the frontrunners who could become the next president of the United States.



The most recent Iowa Straw Polls have former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney as the leading Republican seeking nomination. Romney's views include being pro-life, pro gun control, and in favor of some forms of stem cell research. On the issue of health care, Romney is well-known for a plan he implemented in Massachusetts that required all citizens to obtain health insurance. Romney has also signed an anti-tax pledge, promising no new taxes or raises in existing taxes. Romney has also stated that he is against same-sex marriage and civil unions. Romney's mainly conservative views and "presidential" appearance have gained him popularity in Iowa, a key early primary state.

A man who is the leading Republican in many national polls but who pulled out of the August Iowa Straw Poll is former New York mayor Rudi Giuliani. While Giuliani is more socially liberal than many conservatives would like, he is seen as someone who could deliver real foreign policy results. Republicans have worried about Giuliani as not being conservative enough on issues such as abortion, gay rights, gun control, and illegal immigration. However, the Giuliani campaign has developed a platform that includes securing borders, seeking free-market solutions in health care, cutting government spending, not raising taxes, and remaining aggressive in "the terrorists' war on us."

A final Republican worth consideration is former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee, who finished second to Romney in the August Iowa Straw Poll. Huckabee is conservative on social issues, including being against abortion in all forms, against stem cell research, against homosexual marriage and civil unions, and against gun control. The weakness Huckabee must overcome as far as conservatives are concerned is his economic policy. Huckabee has voiced support for increases in some taxes and increased state spending dramatically as governor. Though his economic positions may cost him, Huckabee's hard-line conservative social stances have earned him at least some consideration.

For Democrats, the consensus front runner is former 1st Lady, New York Senator Hillary Clinton. Clinton has voiced opposition to the Iraq War, a keystone of her campaign platform. She has furthermore supported a government controlled national healthcare system and has made statements which indicate a dislike of the free market. Clinton also is in favor of keeping abortion legal. She has said that she is opposed to same-sex marriage but favors some form of civil union for same-sex couples. Clinton's opposition to the Iraq war (which she has vowed to end by July 2009) coupled with her liberal views have made her a strong frontrunner for the democratic nomination.

Receiving his fair share of buzz since entering the race for the Democratic nomination, Barack Obama is a young and charismatic candidate from Illinois. A former Illinois state legislator and the current Junior Senator from that state, what Obama lacks in governmental experience he makes up for with intellect and energy. Economically, Obama is fairly liberal, advocating universal health care, tax increases for wealthy Americans, and closing tax credits to businesses in order to lessen the budget deficit. Obama's foreign policy views are also, as one would expect, left-leaning. He has called for an end to the war in Iraq, the building of a responsibly-used modern military, and has denounced the leadership of Iran and Palestine. Obama is pro-choice, believing abortion should be legal in accordance with Roe v. Wade. He has expressed support for civil unions for same-sex couples, has a record of voting for gun control measures, and supports stem cell research. Obama has raised enormous amounts of money thus far, a sign that he is seen as someone capable of bringing innovation and change to Washington.

A final Democratic candidate seemingly lost in the race between Clinton and Obama is the Democratic nominee for vice-president in 2004, John Edwards. A former senator from North Carolina, Edwards' grass roots movement has gained strong support in his second bid for the White House. Edwards' economic philosophy is regarded by many as very left-leaning. He espouses such ideas as college for everyone, an "end to poverty" in 30 years, and socialized medicine funded by higher taxes on the rich. Edwards supports legal access to abortion and while he does not support gay marriage, he does favor civil unions and partnership benefits for same-sex couples. Edwards has called his vote to send troops to Iraq a "mistake", calling for gradual troop and contractor withdrawal while subsequently training Iraqi troops and giving Iraqi contractors jobs. Edwards has criticized the recently policies in Iraq, especially targeting the troop surge which he strongly opposes.

These are certainly not the only candidates in the race for the presidency in 2008. However, these are certainly some of the top Democratic and Republican contenders and it is very likely that one of the people mentioned above could be moving in to the White House in little more than a year's time. Whomever that person may be, many Homestead students will have an opportunity to participate in the political process and thereby determine our future course as a nation.

OTHER REPUBLICAN NOMINATION CANDIDATES

Sam Browback	John McCain
Newt Gingrich	Ron Paul
Duncan Hunter	Tom Tancredo
Alan Keyes	Fred Thompson

OTHER DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION CANDIDATES

Joe Biden	Dennis Kucinich
Chris Dodd	Bill Richardson
Mike Gravel	

Government sponsored genocide killing Darfur

By Celia Grundman
Writer

Armenia, then the Holocaust and people said "never again." People said "never again" while the Khmer Rouge massacred two million, people said "never again" while Saddam Hussein gassed the Kurds, people said "never again" while the Hutu sought to exterminate the Tutsi and people said "never again" while Bosnia practiced "ethnic cleansing."

And people still say "never again" today as the Sudanese government sponsors the mass killing of innocent civilians in the western Darfur region of Sudan.

Since February of 2003, over 400,000 Darfurians have been executed, 200,000 have fled to Chad and about 2.5 million are internally displaced persons (IDPs). These people are mostly ethnic-Africans and since the violence has started, Darfur has become highly ethnicized and Darfurians now identify themselves as either ethnic-Africans or ethnic-Arabs. However, no person is truly either as there has been so much intermingling amongst the Africans and the Arabs in the past.

Most ethnic-Africans fall into one of three ethnic tribes: the Fur, the Masaalit or the Zaghawa. Government forces and government sponsored ethnic-Arab troops, known as Janjaweed, have effected mass displacement, murder, rape, and torture of all ethnic-Africans.

These actions, which were a reaction to the rise of two Darfurian rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), have been labeled as genocide by the United States Congress. JEM and SLA rose in reaction to violence already being committed towards Darfurians by their government, which has been killing innocent civilians since the 1980s.

Another cause of the conflict is the difference of lifestyles between ethnic-Arabs and ethnic-Africans. The Arabs are traditionally nomadic herders while the Africans are traditionally farmers. With a decline in arable land, farmers and herders have clashed over valuable and scarce land.

Rebel groups and the Sudanese government signed the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) in May of 2006, but neither side has followed the DPA and the genocide has continued. Humanitarian aid has been thwarted by the Sudanese government and the small African Union troops can provide only feeble protection for a small percentage of civilians.

The United Nations and African Union have decided to deploy forces to Darfur in 2008 in an attempt to protect the ethnic tribes under attack by government forces. There are two major issues with this plan, however. First, the international community has yet to provide enough funding. And secondly, Sudan's government has not been cooperative in the past and is not likely to let troops enter the county despite their apparent acceptance of the proposal.

A force needs to be deployed with or without the consent of Sudan's government in order to stop the genocide. The Sudanese government, which is often referred to as Khartoum, has issued many false promises in the past by accepting UN peacekeeping troops and then later rejecting those same troops.

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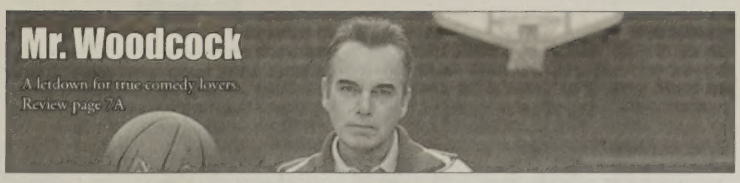

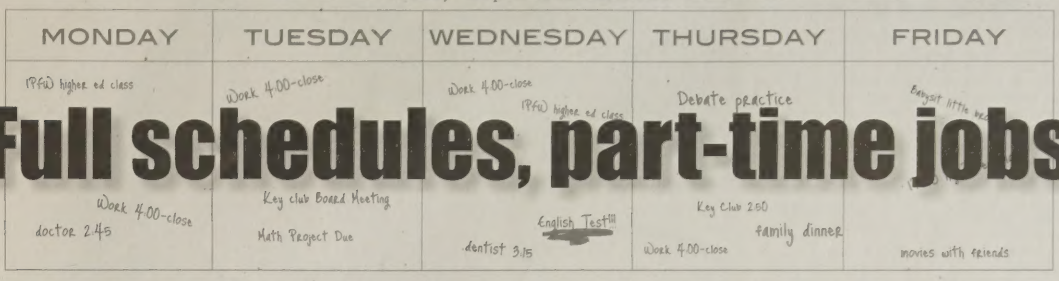

Full schedules, part-time jobs

With pressing demands for their time, today's students learn to cope

Megan Herbert
Writer

As we all get older and step into the real world, our responsibilities become greater. For a good majority of students, this has already started with a part-time job. Many find themselves balancing schoolwork, after school athletics and a demanding workload.

5.5 million students are employed in the American school systems. Of all the high school students, two-thirds are employed, and 26 percent of 16 year-olds have a part-time job.

Everyday after school, Danae Walker (12) has cross-country until 4:30 p.m., and meets on weekends. Walker also has a part-time job at Steinmart where she works two days a week plus weekends. An avid churchgoer, she spends three hours at church three days out of the week. She also does volunteer work tutoring African Refugees for three hours every month.

Walker said that "random" times are the best to get homework done, such as other classes, bus rides to meets, or even staying up late. Study groups also help her a great deal.

"If you're determined to get [homework] done, you'll get it done," Walker said.

> *"I usually try to do homework during class, in the morning or at night. I don't go to bed till 1a.m. every night, and I have to get up at like 5:45 a.m."*
>
> Justine Jost
> Junior

When she needs to get her mind off things, she runs. Practice everyday after school clears her mind in preperation of the busy night ahead.

Sometime during the school year, 80 percent of students will have a job. Justine Jost (11) works 4 to 5 days a week at Dairy Queen and spends two hours everyday at soccer practice. Jost gets especially stressed over homework.

"I usually try to do homework during class, in the morning or at night," Jost said. "I don't go to bed till 1 a.m. every night, and I have to get up at like 5:45 a.m."

Students who work must balance this responsibility with their social lives.

"There's always a conflict over work and friends, but I always choose friends over any activity," Jost said.

Homework and social lives are the biggest problems for the 50 percent of students that work more than 15 hours per school week.

Katy Krin (11) works at McDonald's on Fridays and sometimes Saturdays. Krin has trouble getting homework done when she works both Friday and Saturday, and attends church on Sunday morning.

"I had fries thrown at me one day [at the drive thru]," Krin said.

Simple worries of work stress students to the point where their school work becomes a hassle.

On top of school work and jobs, many find themselves adding extra stress by participating in after school athletics. Tyler Bly (9) spends 30 to 40 hours at Marching Band practice per week. Bly has hopes of joining the school's wrestling team, which would add another 10 hours to his schedule, plus matches.

"I usually do my homework after band practice or after I'm done relaxing," Bly said.

Students with busy schedules often have a difficult time finding a chance to relax without school or band practice to worry about.

"I either meet up with another member on the wrestling team and go wrestle at the school, or I just put in a movie and sit back and relax," Bly said.

If he had the time, Bly would like to take a job at Rave Motion Pictures or a restaurant. But at this time, he cannnot fit anything else into his busy schedule.

"I just take [relaxing and homework] 50/50: half now and half later," Bly said.

STUDY TECHNIQUES
3:00 p.m.
October 4, 2007
Room 316

Learn how to monopolize on the time you spend studying. Homestead will be having a workshop to help you learn to study more effectively. Contact Mrs. Rice with questions.

2007-2008 National Merit Scholar Semi-finalists

Congratulations to Homestead's 2008 National Merit Scholar semi-finalists: Dessislava Moneva (12), Vasundhara Bharagava (12), Lee Farnsworth (12) and Karys Grundman (12).

These four students now have the chance to compete against 16,000 other high school seniors for around 8,200 Merit Scholarship awards, worth $34 million. The 2006 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is used as the screening test for 2008 National Merit Scholar semi-finalists. Semi-finalists must have an outstanding academic record, be recommended by the principal and earn SAT scores that confirm the NMSQT performance. The semi-finalists will then submit a detailed scholarship application including a self-descriptive essay and information about their participation and leadership in both school and community activities.

More than 1.4 million juniors in almost 21,000 U.S. high schools entered the 2008 National Merit Program by taking the 2006 PSAT/NMSQT. The nationwide pool of semi-finalists, composed of less than one percent of high school seniors, contains almost one-third of the 50,000 highest scorers in each state. 90 percent of semi-finalists are expected to become finalists and half of the finalists will be selected as National Merit Scholarship winners, earning the title of National Merit Scholar.

If named a finalist, they will compete for one of three types of Merit Scholarships.

National Merit $2500 Scholarship
Every finalist competes for these single payment scholarships, which are awarded on a state representational basis. Winners are selected without consideration of family financial circumstances, college choice or major career plans.

Corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarships
Corporate sponsors designate their awards for children of their employees or members, for residents of a community where a company has operations or for finalists with career plans the sponsor wishes to encourage. These scholarships may either be renewable for four years of undergraduate study or one-time awards.

College-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards
Each sponsor college selects winners out of those finalists who have been accepted for admission to said college. These are renewable for up to four years of undergraduate study.

Every year, some 1,500 participants who were outstanding, but not finalists, are awarded Special Scholarships provided by corporations and business organizations for students who meet the sponsor's specified criteria and entry requirements of the National Merit Scholarship Program. These may be renewable for up to four years or one time awards.

The results will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and ending in July.

Higher Education

A chance to obtain college credits while still attending high school

Hana Hawash
Writer

Getting to leave early, sleeping in and getting a scrumptious lunch before class are all great perks of Higher Education. Higher Ed is a program in which students, mainly Juniors and Seniors, at Homestead can take college classes during their regular school day. The students can take off two periods from their seven period day per class, taken at the college of their choice. Classes take place in the morning or evening and take place on Tuesday and Thursday, or Monday, Wednesday and Friday, depending on what class you take and which college you attend.

IPFW and St. Francis are just two of the many colleges that make this program, either named ACE or ICE, available. Dual credits are also possible in some classes.

"Dual credit means you can bring [the credit] back here [to Homestead]," said counselor, Mrs. Hamilton. Classes such as Psychology, Biology and English are popular among Juniors and Seniors involved in the program. It gives students a jump start on their college career, as well as eases the transition from high school to college.

"It's like the next step," Hamilton said.

It is such a privilege for students to be able to get a head start on their college classes while still in high school. The classes also cost much less than when enrolled full-time in college, which eases the cost burden dramatically.

"[St. Francis] tries to make it more cost efficient," Hamilton said.

Prices vary among the different schools. Even though St. Francis is a private school, it costs much less in the ACE program than at IPFW.

Students who are ready, mentally and academically, are encouraged to consider enrolling in the program. It is a huge responsibility on the student to be able to take a class in college. The student has to be responsible for driving, parking, books, being on time and doing well in the class.

"It's not just getting out [of school] and being there," Hamilton said. "It would be a waste of time and money to take the class just to get out of going to school all day, unless a real effort is put forth. I don't suggest everyone take the class. [The students] have to prove they're ready."

There are many perks involved in participating in Higher Education. Sleeping in or leaving early are just a couple of the perks. Other things, like having more time to finish those late assignments, getting to eat a good breakfast, watching early morning cartoons or going for a relaxing jog also come along with Higher Ed. In the afternoon, it is a great opportunity to get in some work hours or get homework done in time to go out for a fun night with friends.

"It's way better than being at high school [all day]," Chelsea Patton(12) said. "It's so much more laid back."

Although it is simple to enroll in Higher Education, there are some requirements and guidelines from the college, as well as Homestead. A GPA of 3.0 or higher is required by most schools, such as IPFW. Students must also be in the top 40 percent of their class to enroll at IPFW.

"I don't even let some 3.0 and above [students] do [Higher Ed]," Hamilton said. "[T]hey have to prove they're ready, academically."

If a student is not ready academically, as well as being mature, their counselor will not approve.

The program is a great chance to get started on the future. It is also a big help in the transition into college from high school, making the move much easier.

BENEFITS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Earn college credits earlier and cheaper

Allowed to leave school earlier or sleep later

Take classes at local colleges, like IPFW and Saint Francis

Enrollment is easy, talk to your counselor when you plan next year's schedule

Become acclimated to college lifestyle

By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of driving my brother to his first day of high school. He's a freshman this year, and I'm a senior. Talk about déjà vu. We toured Homestead throughout the summer, practiced his locker combo, and made a dry run of his day walking from room 106 to 704. I pointed out the gerbil hallways that connect the freshmen academy to the rest of the school and became increasingly frustrated when he couldn't find the cafeteria.

Now, a few weeks into the school year he's got it all figured out, or so he thinks. For the freshmen out there, Homestead is more than just school, it's life. This is where you meet your friends, girlfriends, and exes. It's more than just seven periods, this is high school, the glory days that the Uncle Rico's will always remember.

My freshman year was awkward, really, really, awkward. To give you an idea, on the first day of school I rode the bus, had braces, and could barely get up the stairs because I was in a walking cast and had a limp. I thought I had avoided embarrassment by simply covering the cast with baggy pants, instead it just made kids wonder why I walked like a caveman and fell down all the time.

Thankfully, I grew out of that phase. That's what freshman year is, a time of transition. The Scumit Falcons are reunited with the Wussyside Warriors for the first time since elementary school and the tides have turned against the attacking upperclassmen who continue to advance to the front of the food lines. Yes, that's me, sorry.

I will personally say that the underclassmen have nothing to worry about, everything will work out. You're the lucky ones because you have four years left in high school. You will grow up, you will decide who you want to be, and when you go out with someone, you will actually go out. Don't listen to the kids who say, "Freshman year sucks." Grade nine was a blast, but sophomore and junior year are better; I'm fairly certain that senior year won't be too bad either. I hope that gives you something to look forward to when you realize you have 690 school days left.

Enjoy your time as underclassmen because during your junior and senior year you have to figure our what you're doing with your life. What a joke, huh? Seniors you know what I'm talking about when I say, "Where are you going to school next year." It's possibly the most frequently asked question besides, "How was your day."

The situation is society's biggest prank. You have to decide what you're doing with your life when you're seventeen, when you still can't go to the bathroom without a pass, or leave the lunchroom when you're finished eating. My psych teacher even tells me that the brain isn't fully developed until the age of twenty-five. I'm supposed to choose my career path, decide how to spend thousands of dollars on tuition, and fight the effects of an immature frontal lobe…great.

As lost as us upperclassmen may be (and maybe it's just me that's lost) we know a few things about life, about Homestead. I want to ask these kids to help out the next generation. They will never know Mrs. Moake, the backroom, or the first year we beat Snider football after a seven year losing streak. Maybe it's just because I know my brother and a few of his goofy friends that I worry about those ninth graders, or maybe it's because I remember looking up to the seniors and now I am one.

By Erin Quinn
Co-editor in chief

I watched from outside the fence as our defense held Snider near the goal line. I was denied entrance to the event because although I had maneuvered like a taxi driver to the away game from work, I was too late. I could not get in.

They just were not selling tickets anymore. The lazy eyes of the police officer perched comfortably in the ticket booth followed me, after he heard the challenging note in my tone. He was considerably wrapped up in scarves and blankets, so I figured I could outrun him and hop the fence, but I feared the curved pearly whites of his canine counterpart who sat on his heels nearby.

Dozens streamed out of the gate, figuring the clock would run out peacefully and Homestead would emerge victorious without much of a rebuttal from the supposedly downtrodden Panthers. They were wrong, and they gave up their precious seats that I would have fought a bodyguard for.

I love football, by the way. I am drawn by the atmosphere of the purest game in existence, by the roar of the crowd, and by the catches, tackles, and hail marys themselves.

Regardless, I had missed most of the action, and here I was, stuck outside of THE game of the year: the sectional playoff was going on without me, rivalry in full swing, Homestead ahead by a slim seven point margin. It did not seem able that there could be any more turns for the worse.

Then a child sneezed dangerously close to my hand. Fantastic. Suddenly, Snider started a threatening offensive drive. I watched in distress as their quarterback completed one pass after another; I clutched the fence in horror as their quick feet and nimble hands gained them yard after yard of our precious territory. Our defense was crumbling; the holes were gaping. Worst of all, I could not do anything about it.

Eventually, our D-line stood it's ground on the one yard mark for three successive plays. Hoorah. Victory. Rush the field. Get kicked off of the field by the haphazardly bundled, waddling figure that resembled the high and mighty gate attendant, who was ruining the fun for the second time.

My point is, I was on the outside of the fence the entire time. As great as the game was, it was not mine. That was how I felt most of last year - as much as the senior class was extraordinary, I was not a part of it. I was not a part of the band that marched on their knees on the Dome's turf, either. Nor was I old enough to give blood at the Red Cross drive last year, but for that matter I won't be of age this year.

I was always behind the fence. Looking in, hungrily wanting a part of it. Finally, it is my turn to be a senior, to have my hand in running a publication, to park in the close lot, to be a captain of multiple teams, to be a college visitor, teacher's assistant, cadet teacher, and individual group participant all at once.

Although this year has started off with many changes, it is finally ours, for many of us. All we need is our own class personality, our own heroic defensive stands, comebacks, and ability to stick together through the good times, as well the inevitable rough patches. This year promises to be unique, that is for sure.

HOPE baker

PHOTO BY SUSIE REECER

By Kara Hackett
Writer

Summer school is usually viewed as an appalling punishment by high school students; however, for senior, Hope Baker, it presented an opportunity that proved itself to be anything but dreadful. With only one suit case each for seven weeks, Hope and thirty-six fellow Hoosiers traveled to France with Indiana University's Honors Program to attend a French School and improve their language skills last summer. Now, having experienced life in a foreign country, Hope appreciates the benefits of her journey that stretch far beyond academics, altering her perspective on life in America.

Spartana: When and why did you decide to go to France?

Hope: I went [to France] over the summer, from June 6th through July 23rd, and I've been taking French since seventh grade, so it was really fun. I just decided that it would be cool to go to France, and I've always wanted to go. [I went with] a group [through the Indiana University Honors Program], but I was the only one from Homestead. There were thirty-six other people from Indiana.

Spartana: Where exactly was your destination?

Hope: I lived in Breast, which is in Brittany in the upper part near the ocean. The flight there was really long. It was about an eight-hour flight to Amsterdam, and then we had a seven-hour lay-over in the airport. Then we had about a one or two hour flight to Paris, and then a seven-hour bus ride to Breast, so it was long.

I [also] visited Normandy, Mause Michelle, Paris, Versi, and we went to the catacombs, and just different places around those areas, little villages. Along the way you'd have these culture books that you'd fill out so that you'd learn something.

Spartana: Who did you stay with once you arrived in France?

Hope: I stayed with a family, in a little neighborhood in Breast. It was near the school that we went to. [The other members I traveled with and I], all stayed with individual families, and then we'd go to school together. I liked living with the family, and I still keep in touch with them now. It was fun to have somebody that treated you like part of their family, and they could show you all of these cool places. When you went some place, you weren't completely lost because they could help you.

Spartana: What helped you prepare for your trip? Was there anything you were not prepared for?

Hope: At the very beginning [of my trip], I had no idea what people were saying to me, and we couldn't speak English, that was the one rule, so I was like, "Oh, my gosh!" I had to learn little phrases so that I wouldn't be completely lost.

We learned the basics in school (in America), so that helped me get by. Mr. Fryzel helped me prepare a lot. When things would come up in school (in France) with grammar, I would be like, "Oh, I remember that." But some things I would have no idea about because we hadn't learned that yet. It was interesting to see because different schools learn different things, so we were all on kind of different pages.

"...You hear a lot of stereotypes that the French are rude to Americans, but everywhere I went, they were really nice and really accommodating."

Hope Baker
Senior

Spartana: How does school in France compare to school in America?

Hope: [School there] was more intimate because they separated us into three groups according to our skill level. [We studied] conversation, culture, grammar, literature, phonetics, and then we had theater and singing at the end of the day. We took a couple of tests, but it wasn't like for college or anything, it was just to see how much we'd improved.

We had to do a little activity for school (in which) we had to ask them what their stereotypes of Americans were. Of course it was that we all eat so much and that McDonalds is our favorite place, which, some of it's true. [They think] we're big eaters, and that we eat all the time.

The French are really laid back. Their eating times are different every day, and you hear a lot of stereotypes that they are rude to Americans, but everywhere I went, they were really nice and really accommodating.

They all like music videos. American music is really popular over there, and that's most of what was on the radio. [They watch] the same TV shows. They have Lost, Grey's Anatomy and Desperate Housewives, so that was funny, and they have Hot Pockets. I looked because people said they don't have Hot Pockets and they do.

Spartana: What was the most challenging aspect of your trip?

Hope: We weren't allowed to talk to our families over the phone because we couldn't speak English, and we could only email once a week, so it was kind of hard at first, like not talking to your family. I wanted to call my mom and tell her what I was doing. So my emails were very long.

Spartana: Do you still keep in touch with any of the friends you made while on the trip?

Hope: On Facebook, we all have a little group, where all my friends [from the program] and I keep in touch. We do it in French just because we know what we're saying now. I want to go back and see my family, and hopefully, visit other places someday.

Spartana: What would you recommend other students who are interested in travel abroad do to prepare for the experience?

Hope: Talk to your language teachers about it. I think the Indiana University Honors Program actually does [trips to] Germany, Spain, and Mexico for the other languages. I can't believe I ever did it because on the bulletin boards I saw the advertisement and thought, "Oh, that would be fun." Then Mr. Fryzel showed the [program's] video and I was like, "I should ask my mom." I totally thought she would say, "No," and then, she said, "Yes," I was like, "Okay!" So just go for it. It really changes your life and gives you a new outlook.

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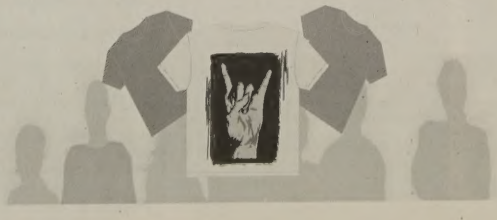

moviereview

By Haley Zimmerman
Copy Editor

Yeah, that's right. *Mr. Woodcock*. Go ahead and snicker at the name, it's one of the few laughs you'll be getting here.

Sean William Scott (*American Pie, Dude Where's My Car?*) portrays John Farley, a young self-help guru who returns to his childhood home to discover his mother is engaged to marry his old high school gym teacher, Mr. Woodcock. This absolutely evil "teacher" of physical education is played by Billy Bob Thornton (*Sling Blade, The Astronaut Farmer*).

Woodcock haunted Farley's life as a child and just can't wait to inflict some more psychological wounds on his son-in-law-to-be. Thornton's character is really lacking in imagination and doesn't really do much more than stand around and yell at people who are too afraid to defend themselves.

Probably the funniest character in the entire film is Farley's agent, played by actress Amy Poehler (*Saturday Night Live*). Alcoholic and obnoxious to the max, this woman's utter lack of knowing how to control herself in public makes for a relatively amusing couple of minutes.

Maybe I just didn't like it because I've never had a "Mr. Woodcock" in my life so I couldn't really relate to the characters in the movie or maybe I was uncomfortable with a double-dose of three-named actors, but I'm pretty sure there is a more definite reason behind my dislike. Just plain stupid jokes that are way too predictable make this movie dredge along like a two-legged billy goat; it just doesn't work.

If you have any respect for the comedic genre of cinema, don't go see this movie… at least until it hits the dollar theater. This movie just tries too hard to get you to laugh and misses that goal completely; there simply comes a point when jokes involving someone's mother just aren't funny anymore.

musicreview

By Greg Kyes-Myland
Writer

Aesop Rock and the Definitive Jux record label crew are back with the recent release of Aesop's Rock's None Shall Pass, released August 28. In a time when mainstream hip-hop continues to produce absolutely nothing worthwhile ("Crank dat soulja boy?") those who are looking for a little substance with their music can rejoice.

A New York native, Aesop Rock has been setting fire to the underground hip-hop or "indie rap" scene since the late 1990's. His first major record came in 2000 with the release of Float. Since then he has evolved from album to album. His first real critical acclaim came in 2001 with the release of Labor Days. Aesop Rock later said that he did not really know how to handle all the attention. The by-product was the album Bazooka Tooth (2003), which showed a very hypertense and angry side of the young indie-rapper. The album was so different from his previous releases that fans and critics alike raised eyebrows as to Aes's stylistic solidity.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AMAZON.COM

Welcome 2007 and the much-anticipated release of None Shall Pass. In this album, Aesop Rock returns to his roots while still bringing a very new sound to the table, much of which is thanks to DJ and mix-man, Blockhead. One can notice right of the bat, that in comparison with previous albums where Blockhead presented very stock, low-key beats, None Shall Pass delivers a much bigger sound. This is especially noticeable on tracks like "Catacomb Kids" and "Coffee." Overall, the music half of None Shall Pass is strong. It is a very palatable, emotional flow upon which Aesop Rock can deliver his signature dense wordplay.

The messages in Aes's dense wordplay have some originality as well in comparison to his older albums. A perfect example of this is track nine, "Citronella". The guy who once said, "If the revolution ain't gonna be televised then, hell, I'll probably miss it," now rails on the tv and the entire media presentation in a very clever twisting of words. Perhaps the cleverest track on this album is "Bring Back Pluto," a down-tempo, jazz-infused beat that uses Pluto's demotion from planet status as a metaphor for bureaucratic bullying. As usual, Aesop uses his tongue twisting rants and verbal pointillism to deliver full out, full length stories such as "Fumes" and "The Harbor is yours." The latter is a story of an old pirate who believes in a mermaid. "Yaar, heckled the swabbies at the bar," Aesop rhymes, "He'll be the laughingstock of the Barbary coast war." But when you look at the song (or story) a little deeper, you can see that it is really a message about obsession.

Overall, this latest installment of that one-of-a-kind Aesop Rock indie rap is top notch. Fans of Aesop will be more than pleased with this album that is potentially his best yet. However, for those who haven't had the pleasure of encountering Aesop Rock and are ready to leave Soulja Boy and Fitty Cent at the club or party and hear something unique and fresh, here is your answer.

foodreview

By Luke Chase, Margaret Distler and Haley Zimmerman
Editors

Haley Zimmerman:

The first thing I noticed when walking into the restaurant was the fantastically pleasing smell of pizza baking on an old fashioned brick oven, the way pizza was meant to be cooked.

While their menu contains a relatively wide array of Italian dishes, the smell alone was enough to convince me to order the pizza. Probably the most flavorful, decadent, wonderous, fantastic pizza pies that I've ever had the pleasure of consuming. Their heavenly sauce (a 100-year-old Italian recipe) alone is well worth making a trip down to this place. The thin and crispy Italian-style crust with minimal sauce that lets out a divine burst of flavor for the taste buds was a purely divine experience.

Even though the bruschetta was no more than some garlic bread with less garlic and some tomatoes thrown on top, but it was one of the very few times in my life in which I actually enjoyed a food product involving un-sugared (ie: ketchup) tomatoes.

Although a little understaffed, (we only saw the one waitress), the people who work there get the food out on the table at a quick enough rate that you barely notice.

The restaurant radiated in a warm, friendly atmosphere… right down to the Goodfellas poster hanging in the hallway next to the restrooms. I can easily say that this was one of the best pizza-centric experiences in my life.

Luke Chase:

The warm inviting atmosphere made me comfortable enough to feel the urge to remove my shoesw, but hey what else is new, eh? In the mood for a good sub, something that seems foreign to Midwest food establishments, I ordered the Hugo. This "house specialty" was a hot sandwich with ham, capicollo, salami, lettuce, cabbage, cheeses, onion and a homemade sauce. I expected a thick meaty sandwich. Upon its arrival I was utterly disappointed in a mess that look constructed by a four year old, it tasted fine but in essence this "house specialty" was a glorified ham sandwich, not worth the $5.49. However, Haley's pizza was amazing. The sauce was divine, unlike anything I have ever tasted. Definitely worth stopping in if you are downtown.

Margaret Distler:

I was pleasantly surprised with my overall experience at Toscani's. I had been there a while ago, but it was nice to be reminded of their amazing food. We were seated inside, but there were tables set up outside for customers. The tables were a little close together, but not enough that it bothered the conversations from table to table. Our waitress was cheerful, friendly and helpful. She recommended one of the specialties- the sausage roll. When she said it was enough for two people to share, she was not kidding. (I actually took half of the roll home and finished the rest for lunch the following day. The roll was still delicious a day later.)

We also ordered the bruschetta and garlic bread, which were both decent. I was most surprised with the service, though. I looked for flaws in our service, and I had to really search to find imperfections. The appetizers arrived in a timely manner and as soon as our glasses were close to empty, our waitress immediately filled them.

My sausage roll was amazing, though. I told Luke I could eat the whole thing, but even with a runner's appetite, just one half had me feeling completely full. The homemade pizza dough added to the delicious taste, making every bite a little piece of heaven. It cost $7.50 but I thought it was well worth it, considering it made two meals for me. Would I go back? You bet I would. They even offer carry-out service, which is a bonus in my book.

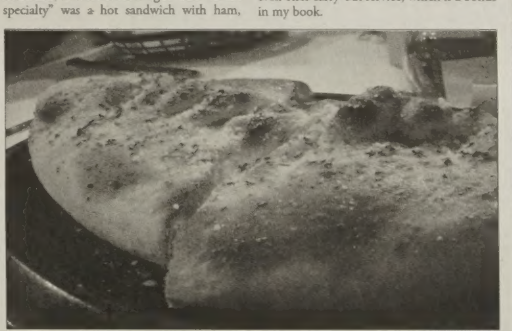
PHOTO MARGARET DISTLER

bookreviews

By Arpita Bhardwaj
Writer

Silence
Thomas Perry

An interesting read, Silence is a book about Jack Till, who helps a woman named Wendy Harper disappear. Jack did not realize what the consequences of what he helped Wendy to do would be. Her ex-boyfriend and business partner are being framed for her presumed murder and Till must find Wendy before Paul and Sylvie, hired assassins, find her and kill her. Paul and Sylvie later find that the man who hired them has given out their identities, so they ask for a higher price for the assassination. Now, they must devise a plan to double-cross the man who hired them before he cheats them.

Heartsick
Chelsea Cain

Released this month, Heartsick is about Portland Detective, Archie Sheridan. Sheridan spends ten years tracking down a beautiful serial killer, Gretchen Lowell, who eventually kidnaps Archie and tortures him for ten days. She then turns herself in to the police and is put in jail. While attempting to forget those miserable days, Archie Sheridan is on another case looking for a killer who is murdering teenagers. He knows he must concentrate on finding this killer, but it is difficult to do while trying to forget his torture and trying to get a newspaper reporter to stop following him.

gamingreview

By Joe Zurawski
Writer

Master Chief is here to finish the fight in the long awaited game for the Xbox 360. There are three editions of Halo and you can pick what one best fits your liking. The editions are legendary, limited edition and the regular edition, which each have their perks. The legendary version offers two bonus disks packed with behind the scene info and more and costs $129.99. The limited edition costs $69.99 and has two bonus disks packed with extra footage and a sleek, metal collectors case. The regular edition is basically just the game, costing $59.99.

Halo 3 takes full advantage of the Xbox 360 HD graphics and has many new features, including new multiplayer levels, a whole new campaign and many new weapons to look for. Some of these features are having bubble shields to protect yourself instead of grenades and other cool new weapons like the missile pod, a giant weapon that slows your movement down and prevents you from driving vehicles. There is also the Spartan laser witch is a very powerful weapon. There are many new enemies, like the suicidal grunts, to fight. Overall, the amusement you will get out of Halo 3 is worth the large chunk of change you will be paying for it.

televisionreview

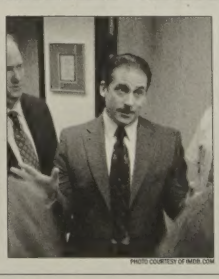
PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB.COM

By Arpita Bhardwaj
Writer

Based on a popular British series, The Office will be continuing its run with the fourth season, starting last night. The series will resume on NBC at 9:00 p.m. every subsequent Thursday. In the hour-long season premiere, Michael hosted a "Fun Run" for the Scranton Business Park. Despite Michael's spirited efforts, an unfortunate accident happened, which lead him to question his employee's religious beliefs. He went through all of this thinking the office was cursed. Later in the season, old and new relationships will be explored. Angela and Dwight will carry on with their unusual relationship, as Pam and Jim will begin their own.

1.

THE STORY BEHIND THE PAINTER BOYS

PHOTOS BY MARGARET DISTLER & SUZIE REECER

7.

8.

2.

6.

3.

By Chris Ray
Sports Editor

Some game day traditions are well known. Cheerleaders throw rubber footballs to the hopeful fans, girls wear their boyfriend's jerseys and students stand and cheer for the entire game. However, one group of male students trumps all other traditions. This group is not hard to find, as they are often seen sporting knee socks, basketball shorts, goofy hats, slick shades, and painted chests. The collection of men is creatively known as the Painter Boys.

These wild and crazy fans are responsible for ignighting the "always enthusiastic" student section at the football games. Phrases like "HHS Spartans!" or "Go Spartans" are usually seen painted on their chests. They lead students in chants, wave Spartan flags and bang on trashcans turned into drums. As easy as it may look to lead a student section in cheers, it's much harder than one would think; it takes a lot to be part of the elite group of upper-classmen and keep students cheering for the entire game.

"You need to have a lot of heart, desire, determination, and the will to work hard in the off-season getting into game-shape," Dave Osborn (12) said, a member of the Painter Boys, who has been seen with a 'T,' 'N,' and 'S' on his chest. "I like the letter 'T' because it stands for 'Tenacious,' and that's how the Spartans play."

Being in good shape is a necessary trait to being a solid Painter Boy. At first glance it looks like these guys just stand in the bleachers and cheer, but they actually are unbelievably active all game. After each touchdown, extra point, safety or field goal scored by the Spartans, the Painters do one pushup for every point on the scoreboard. They also have to run a lap around the cheerleaders after each touchdown. So far in 2007, the Painter Boys have performed an average of 107 pushups and five laps around the cheerleaders per game. However, the hardest part may be getting the fans in the game.

Another factor in becoming a Painter Boy is dealing with the cold weather in late season games. Many wonder how these guys stand the winter-like conditions without wearing shirts, gloves, or proper protection from the elements.

"Fortunately, we haven't had to endure the cold yet, but we will have to dig deep within ourselves when it gets here," Osborn said.

But not everyone has what it takes.

"Besides the vigorous interview process, we just see who wants to paint and we meet up at Homestead before the game," Osborn said.

If you think you have what it takes to be a Painter, ask yourself a few questions. Can you do around 107 pushups a game? Can you withstand freezing temperatures with no shirt for multiple hours? If not, you're not cut to become a real Painter Boy.

A FRIDAY AS A PAINTER BOY

arrive two hours before kick off. choose letter assignments. paint letters on chests. cookout while listening to music. relax, play football or cornhole until game starts. run into stadium. assume positions at front of student section. rally up students with cheers. celebrate when team scores points. do push ups on track. go back to stands.

5.

4.

Clockwise from the top: **1.** The Painter Boys spell out "Spartans!" for the opening kickoff. **2.** Derek Kinzer (11) yells into a megaphone while Shane Ruckel (12) and Tim Veenstra (12) watch the play. **3.** Seniors Dave Osborn, Aaron Rittenhouse, Jacob Weide and Luke Neally, all run with flags, which are stored in the concession stand during the fall season. **4.** Neally, Weide, Logan Carsten (12), Osborn, Kinzer and Veenstra relax in the far lot while waiting for the game to begin. **5.** Kyle Frebel (12) runs with a flag on the track. **6.** Ruckel outlines an exclamation mark on the chest of Carsten. **7.** The Painter Boys line up for push ups after a touchdown. **8.** Looking at the reflection on his car, Rittenhouse applies his own face paint.

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homestead high school
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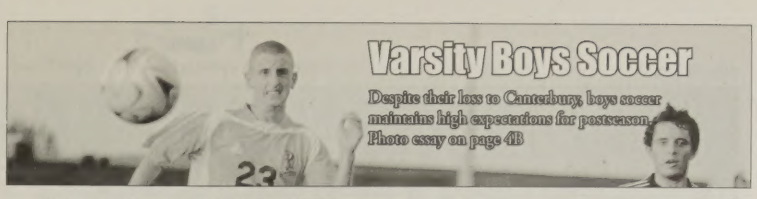
fort wayne, indiana 46814

Sports


Varsity Boys Soccer
Despite their loss to Canterbury, boys soccer maintains high expectations for postseason.
Photo essay on page 4B

Friday, September 28, 2007

FOOTBALL UNDEFEATED IN NHC

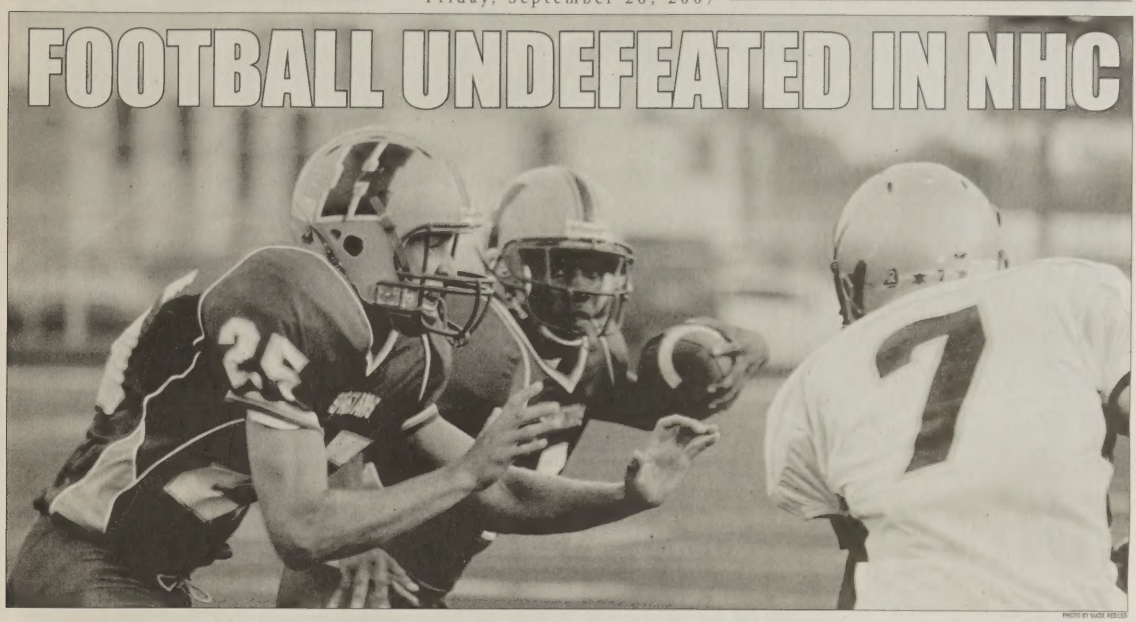


PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Above: Ross Heckber (12) blocks for Charles Seals (12) during the game against Columbia City on Sept. 7. Both seniors will play in their last home game of their high school career tonight against Carroll.

Quarterback Laughlin leads team to victory against Dekalb, Spartans face Carroll tonight

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

Starting quarterback goes down with an injury and his team is in first place in conference heading into the second half of the season? Probably the most unrealistic sports story. But for the Spartans, this so called "fairy tale" story is reality. With Logan Laughlin (11) now the starting quarterback, the Spartans are leading the Northeast Hoosier Conference.

"We are playing a lot better since the first game at Huntington North," Laughlin said. "A lot of us have stepped up."

The Spartans have not looked back since their third and fourth games of the season, wins against Warsaw and East Noble, respectively. They have won five in a row, notching wins over Columbia City, Bellmont and DeKalb. Both games against Columbia City and Bellmont proved to be easy wins, combining to outscore the Eagles and the Braves 79-0.

Going into last Friday's game against DeKalb, many area media had determined the game to be the game of the week. Both the Spartans and the Barons were undefeated in conference play heading into the match up, with the drivers' seat of the NHC on the line. The team took care of DeKalb easily last year, winning 34-11 on the road and stretching their win streak to eleven wins over the Barons. Surely the Barons were looking for revenge, and with a NHC title on the line, revenge would have been even sweeter.

"Coach Zolman told us to ignore the media during the week leading up to the game," said Laughlin. "Just about every practice we had some media camera there, we couldn't let that get to us."

With the cover of Fort Wayne's "GameNite" magazine covered with both DeKalb and Homestead players, it was hard not to ignore the hype of the game. Some players saw it as a way to get pumped even more for the game. Still, the coaching staff made sure that the players focused on the game.

During the week, the team continued to practice, same way as always. Monday and Tuesday being the "walk-through" days where the team tried to fix what they did wrong in the previous game and also what they will be expecting against their next opponent. Wednesday and Thursday were the more grueling practices, full of game-speed drills and scrimmages. Friday, game day, consists of review of the game plan and other pre-game customs.

> *"We are playing a lot better since the first game at Huntington North. A lot of us have stepped up."*
>
> **Logan Laughlin (11)**

"Right before the team comes out of the locker room and onto the field, [Coach] Zolman gives the team a speech that gets the team pumped," said assistant coach, Shawn Harkness.

At the beginning of the game, the team came out on all cylinders, scoring early in the first quarter off a Charles Seals (12) touchdown run. The Barons, though, were quick to respond, adding two touchdowns of their own and took a 14-7 lead at halftime. In the second half, the teams traded scores, one by Brandon Derck (12) and one by Ross Heckber (12). DeKalb still held the lead after answering the Spartan's touchdowns.

Late in the fourth quarter, the team took control of the ball with just over two minutes left in the game, down 26-21. Laughlin and Co. put together a good two-minute drill drive, coming down to the DeKalb 5-yard line with 20 seconds left. Lining up in a shotgun formation, Laughlin lobbed a quick pass to Justin Hoffman (11) k the corner off the end zone. Hoffman was able to come down with the ball and stay inbounds, giving the Spartans a 27-26 lead with 18 seconds to go.

"When I threw the ball, I didn't want to over throw [Hoffman] and have it go out of bounds, and I didn't want to under throw it because he had a defender right on him," said Laughlin. "I just kind of lofted it up in the air and he made a great catch."

Once Hoffman had come down with the catch, an eruption came from the west side of the stadium as the rest of the team mobbed him.

"As I saw the ball coming at me, I just made sure I was going to catch the ball just like any other play," said Hoffman. "After I had caught it, I realized I had just given our team the chance to win the game."

The Spartans would go on to win what was a very hard fought game and what Fort Wayne media coverage had called "the greatest ending to a high school football game in Fort Wayne."

The team now has control of the NHC, as the only remaining undefeated team in conference play. Tonight, they will face upset minded Carroll, who were defeated 36-3 by the Spartans last year.

With the maturity of Laughlin at quarterback and the rest of the team supporting him, the Spartans are in the drivers' seat in the NHC. The offense has not missed a beat, averaging just under 30 points per game. The team's goal is to win conference, and after last Friday night's win over DeKalb, that goal has turned into a reality.

SENIOR NIGHT

Before kickoff tonight, the senior athletes participating in cheerleading, cross country and football will be recognized starting at 6:45pm. After their half time show, the senior band members will also be acknowledged. All of the band seniors will be wearing special yellow capes as well.

Girls' golf team fails to advance to regionals

Seniors Dickmeyer, Wesner move forward as individuals with scores of 95, 94

By Andrew Weiss
Writer

Just like big sisters lead by example, so did Kelley Dickmeyer (12) and Lauren Wesner (11) on Saturday during Sectionals and during the entire season. Wesner, who shot a 94, lead the team with the seventh lowest score out of fifty best golfers from their section from Northeast Indiana. Not to be out done, however, Dickmeyer finished eighth overall; she shot one stroke higher than Wesner to finish with a 95.

"We were competing [the best golfer on the team statistically] on the team this year," Dickmeyer said.

The team for sectionals was composed of Dickmeyer, Wesner, Suzie Reecer (10), Taylor Lamphier (10), and Ashley Heath (11). Heath, who shot a 96 tied for 10th overall at Timberidge Golf Course in Bluffton. The girls fell short reaching regionals finishing in fourth and needing to finish in third to advance.

SECTIONAL TEAM SCORES	
Lauren Wesner	94
Kelley Dickmeyer	95
Taylor Lamphier	96
Suzie Reecer	100
Ashley Heath	107

"As a team, we were really disappointed that we didn't advance to regionals. This was the first time in a long time Homestead hasn't advanced," Kelley Dickmeyer said.

The girls thought that despite the experience they still did very well for how young the team was.

"The teams in our sectional were really strong this year and they played their best and deserved it," Suzie Reecer said, who finished fourth on the team in sectionals.

"I think we could have done better, [we] would have liked to make it out of sectionals. That was our goal this year since the beginning of the year," Wesner (11) said.

"We could have done better, but we were a young team. I'm really looking forward to next year. We will have some good freshmen coming in next year," Reecer said.

Although the team did not make it out of sectionals this year, they were very successful at the NHC tournament two Saturdays ago. The team finished third, just behind state ranked DeKalb and East Noble at Noble Hawk Golf Course.

"I think we all had fun this year, the coaches made practices fun for everyone on the team," Wesner said.

Although the team finished fourth in sectionals and did not advance, they may have if there wouldn't have been a change at the last second.

"It really hurt us that Canterbury (finished third) switched into our section and Concordia switched out. I think we would have been able to [shot a lower score than] Concordia and advanced if it wouldn't have been for that," said Dickmeyer.

Although this season did not meet the team's expectations that they had set at the beginning of the year, there are things to look forward to next year for the team. The varsity team went 8 and 3 this year losing to two teams that finished ahead of them in the NHC tournament, East Noble and Dekalb. Also, the junior varsity team went undefeated this year.

The team has all of the returning players except for Dickmeyer, who is graduating, while Wesner is moving. Lamphier, Heath and Reecer are all returning next year; they all played in sectionals for the team this season.

"Someone needs to step up and be a leader and they need lots of commitment from the girls," Wesner said.

"How hard they work will determine how good they will be; they really need to work their butts off to be good," Dickmeyer added.

"This team really didn't have a lot of experience this year; this extra year of experience will help the team next year and for years to come," Ashlee Larkey (9) said.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Above: Kelley Dickmeyer (12) lines up her putt at the McMillen Golf Course.

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

Girls soccer fends off Panthers

By Kara Busse
Writer

The girls' varsity soccer team hosted Carroll last Monday for the Northeast Hoosier Conference Championship. The girls had been both preparing and looking forward to the big game for several weeks, as they finally had the chance to bring home their championship. Practice the week leading up to the game was full of sprints, ball control drills and plenty of possession drills.

"We work on possession a lot during practice, that's why we normally do well with it during the game," Kate Bienz (11) said.

Carroll scored first and took the lead into halftime. Homestead then stepped up their game and Jordyn Weber (10) scored for the Lady Spartans, catching the team up and tying the game at 1. Homestead was able to hold off the Chargers in the second half. Team captain, Kelsey Knapp (12), led the team to a victory by scoring off of a header after the ball hit the cross bar off of a free kick by Shannon Collins (12). Nicole Musi (10) had previously capitalized on this tactic during the team's game against Bishop Dwenger this year.

"We didn't start strong against Carroll. They scored first and we quickly gained possession of the game back, and were able to come out with a win," Weber said. "It was a good game for the team."

Even though the team has a conference games remaining against Norwell and New Haven, the Lady Spartans are confident that they will not meet a contest from those teams and have all but won the conference title.

The big game against the Carroll was followed by another against Snider High School. It was a battle the entire game from both teams. However, Weber drove the ball up the field towards the end of the half and gave the team a 1-0 lead going into the break. Shots were exchanged between the Spartans and Panthers the entire second half, but no shot found its way into the back of the net.

"The game ended up going our way but Snider was having a good day. It could have gone either way, but we really ended up playing well together that day," Abby Paul (11) said.

"It wasn't an easy game for us," said Knapp. "[Snider] was playing really well and we had to come out with a little more effort in the second half."

Sectional draws were held on Monday of the Carroll game, and the team is pleased with where they were placed. The Lady Spartans will first play Concordia, a team they have not yet played this year. Assuming the team wins, they will play the winner of Elmhurst and Northside. The sectional final would be played against either Canterbury or Bishop Dwenger (currently ranked fifth in the state). Homestead has already beaten both Canterbury and Bishop Dwenger earlier in the season, so the team is very confident about heading to regional play.

"No matter who we're going to have to play, our team needs to come out hard and play well to win," Weber said.

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

Above: Kesley Knapp (12) attempts to shoot the ball around a Snider defender. The Spartans ended up winning the game 1-0.
Left: Abby Paul (11) slides to beat a Snider player for possesion of the ball as Erin Lessing (12) looks on during the second half of play against Snider.

Girls cross on record pace, aim for state

Boys team struggles, looks towards senior leadership

By Derek Luttrell
Writer

Although striding for respectable times with both strength and audacity, it seems that the boys' cross-country team just cannot keep from coming up short.

"I'm actually not very satisfied with how [the team] is performing lately. I think we are actually under-performing and some people aren't doing as well as I know they are capable of," the team's captain, Brandon Saalfrank (12). Saalfrank's feelings are somewhat understandable though, as only one Spartan runner was able to reach the finish line in the top 20 at the West Noble Invitational. The team's fastest runner, Kodi Mullins (9), finished 20th, and Saalfrank finished the race in 23rd place.

"I'd like to finish ahead of Kodi sometime this year," Saalfrank said. "But the kid's just a beast."

Saalfrank shoulders the team's struggles, however, realizing that he is captain and is looked up to by the rest of the team.

"I consider myself to be less demeaning than captains in the past. Especially since we aren't doing as well as we would like, I like to keep a positive attitude going for the team and not put it any lower than it already is," Saalfrank said.

The team did finish in fourth place overall at the West Noble Invitational on Sept. 15, but the morale of the team has slowly declined as individual's are beginning to feel the wear and tear from the long season.

The team continues to feel the loss of Evan Hanley (11), a key component on last year's team that was forced to miss this season while he spends the school year in Germany as part of a student exchange program.

"Evan will carry the team next season. I've been staying in touch with him and he's been keeping up with his running, so he should come back strong as ever," Saalfrank said.

Team morale for the girl's cross-country team, in contrast, is at a high after their strong recent performances. At the West Noble Invitational, almost all of the female runners set new personal records, with notable improvements by Meghan Terrell (11), Chloe Smith (10), and Laura Donnell (10). Katrina Schreiber (9) also dropped a considerable amount of time off of her previous performances, which earned her the right to run on the varsity team at the next weekend.

"The [underclassmen] are doing all the right things and it's great to see them all doing so well," one of the team captains, Rachel Taylor (12) said.

Running the New Haven Invitational allowed both boys' and girls' teams to familiarize themesleves with the terrain of the upcoming championship races later in the season.

"We've been picking up the pace on practices and running shorter distances with faster times," Taylor said.

Hopes are high for the girls team this season after falling just short of making it to the state finals last season, finishing out of the top five qualifying positions at their semi-state race.

"It would be amazing just to reach the state finals for my senior year and for a last memory of high school cross country," Taylor said. "I want it for myself, and I also want to see the rest of the team finish strong and be happy with their season."

"It would be amazing just to reach the state finals for my senior year and for a last memory of high school cross country."

Rachel Taylor
Senior

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Ali Kattman (11) races to finish ahead of the competition.

BY THE NUMBERS

7 - Number of runners on varsity
19:24 - Meghan Terrell's fastest time
3.1 - Miles ran each race
30 - Days until state finals
24 - Number of girls on team
1.5 - Hours of practice each day
30 - Miles ran each week

Volleyball team hosts tournament, finishes fourth out of eight

By Kalyn Jorgensen
Writer

The Lady Spartans struggled toward the beginning of the season but they are beginning to feel comfortable playing with each other and are hoping for success. With majority of the team being underclassmen, the team has had to practice continuously to learn which teammates play the best with others.

"I think that we just don't know how to play as a new team yet," Chelsea Childers (11) said. "We have a lot of talent, we just don't know how to put it together. It gets better every game though. We are finally learning how each other play, and hopefully that will show during the last part of our season and through sectionals."

While the team consists of mainly sophomores and juniors, there is one freshman player. Rylie Pearson (9) is one of the middle hitters for the team and although she is the youngest girl on the team, she enjoys being a part of it.

"I love being on the team," Pearson said. "All of the games are so much fun, especially the home ones. I really enjoy practicing and playing with the upperclassmen because they are so nice to me."

High school volleyball kind of came as a shock to Pearson because of the skill and difficulty level.

"In the middle school level we were still just learning the game and how to focus on our skills," Pearson said. "In high school volleyball it is faster pace and more intense."

Other new varsity players are Molly Smith (10) and Katelyn Waters (10). Both Smith and Waters have played Homestead volleyball one year prior to this season. They participated on the freshman team with Smith as a middle hitter and Waters as a setter. Though both enjoy playing at the varsity level, it has been a drastic change from their previous volleyball experiences.

"I have learned so much from playing on varsity," Waters said. "It's a totally different atmosphere and it's so much more competitive. I love it. I've really learned to be a team player and be much more aggressive. The experience has taught me a lot and every practice i'm always learning something from the girls and the coaches."

The Lady Spartans participated in the Lafayette Jeff tournament on September 15 and the team was victorious in two of their four games.

"I think the reason we won our last two matches was because we put a lot more effort and intensity into the game," Childers said.

"Playing is still a lot of fun even when we don't win," Childers said. "The girls on all three teams are a lot of fun to be with and I really look forward to hanging out with them more than anything."

The Lady Spartan's excelled this past weekend at the Homestead Volleyball Tournament. The Spartan's beat two out of their three opponents. After pool play was concluded, the team competed for third place against East Noble. They played three very close and intense games, but East Noble came out on top. The Spartan's were flustered about the loss because they had previously beaten East Noble in the regular season. The team's record for the tournament awarded them fourth place. After all of the games had been completed, the tournament awards were presented. Becky Price (12) was awarded with a spot on the All-Tournament Team.

"It's really exciting that I was given the award. I'm flattered but I do believe volleyball is a team sport. Without the effort and hard work of my team I wouldn't have been able to get it," Price said.

Boys tennis begins sectional play

First day of postseason competition postponed, match resumed next day due to weather

Yogesh Jonna
Writer

This year, the road through sectionals and regionals has been much tougher than usual. The boys' varsity tennis team had difficult matches last weekend against the top ranked teams in the state but performed very well at the Homestead Invitational.

The team lost to Carmel, Centergrove and Jasper. On Friday evening, Sept. 21, the team lost 5-0 to fifth ranked Carmel. Danny Reecer (12) lost to Michael Moe at number one singles in straight sets 3-6 and 5-7.

"We performed not to our usual par but we played three really good teams that are all in the top 10," Michael Zurcher (10) said.

The following morning the varsity team lost to seventeenth ranked Jasper 4-1. Reecer had his first win of the weekend against Jasper's number one singles. The team then played second ranked Center Grove and lost 5-0. Reecer lost to Austin Sansone at number one singles 3-6 and 1-6. Norton did not play number one doubles Saturday against Centergrove due to shoulder and rotator cuff problems. The boys' varsity team ended the weekend with only one win by Reecer.

"We lost to Jasper 4-1, I don't think any of us played our best, I don't know if we were overlooking Jasper and looking more toward Center Grove," Norton said. "I did not expect us to lose that match. At the Homestead Invitational, all three of our singles did really well. Caleb and I didn't do too well, but two doubles hung in there really well."

Floyd Central, Manchester, Northridge, Bishop Dwenger, Concordia, Peru and Snider attended the Homestead Invitational. The tennis team tied for first place with Floyd Central. At number one singles, Danny Reecer (12) lost to Floyd Central, in the final round. At number two singles, Conner Andrews (9) lost to Floyd Central in the final round. The team's only champion was Zurcher at number three singles.

"It's always great to see that you're number one in your spot," Zurcher said. "A lot of hard work has gone into this season, getting our singles and doubles to as high as they are."

Geoff Norton and Caleb Cook (11) had one win, followed by two losses. Floyd Central had three champions at number one singles, number two singles, and number one doubles. The team tied with Floyd Central, each with 29 points, to end the invitational.

The varsity team also lost to Culver Academy 5-0. Reecer and Andrews lost in straight sets at one and two singles. Zurcher, Norton, Cook, Overlander and Bradley White (10) all won their first sets at three singles, one and two doubles. However, they all lost the next two sets, giving Culver a victory. Culver Academy is now ranked eighth in the state.

"Culver is a really good school. [The loss] showed us that we are not as good as we could be, it was kind of a wake up call that we have to work harder," Norton said.

The team received a tough sectional draw of Canterbury on the first day. For most of the season, the varsity team was ranked higher than their local rival, but after losses this weekend the team slipped to 15th in the state, thus giving up their footing above the Cavaliers. They met Wednesday on Spartan territory for the first round of sectionals. The varsity team did not have the opportunity to play 13th ranked Canterbury earlier this season, so each team will go into the match slightly unaware of their competition.

"We don't talk past sectionals because we have a tough match with Canterbury, so we haven't focused on anybody else," Coach Jim Clark said, prior to the important matchup. "We know that Canterbury is a very good and competitive team, and we are going to get ready for them physically and mentally and let our racquets talk for us."

Pending on on their performance in sectionals (the results of which are unavailabe as of the press day due to the postponment on account of rain) the team will face Westview in regionals. The Shamrocks of Topeka started off the season unranked but have won several matches to be ranked tenth in state.

The main difference between last year state-runner up Spartans and this year's team is the replacement of four seniors by several freshmen. Last years' seniors include Cameron Huffman ('07), Greg Dillon ('07), Josh Rifkin ('07), and Josh Butcher ('07). Also, last year's team faced Canterbury prior to the postseason.

"Last year we had four seniors, the experience is what got us into the finals," Geoff Norton (12) said. "We have talent, but we have to keep each other pumped up. Some of the freshmen really don't show the emotion that they need to."

VARSITY LINEUP

#1 Singles:
Danny Reecer (12)

#2 Singles:
Connor Andrews (9)

#3 Singles:
Michael Zurcher (10)

#1 Doubles:
Geoff Norton (12)
Caleb Cook (11)

#2 Doubles:
Jordan Mauk (9)
Austin Overlander (9)

up for grabs:

29th straight sectional title

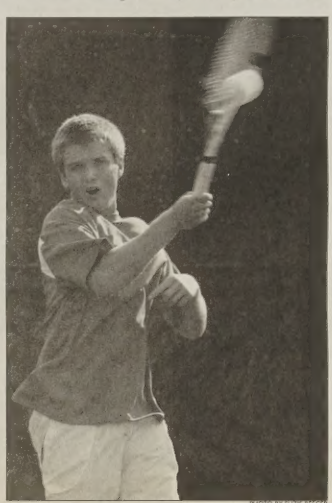
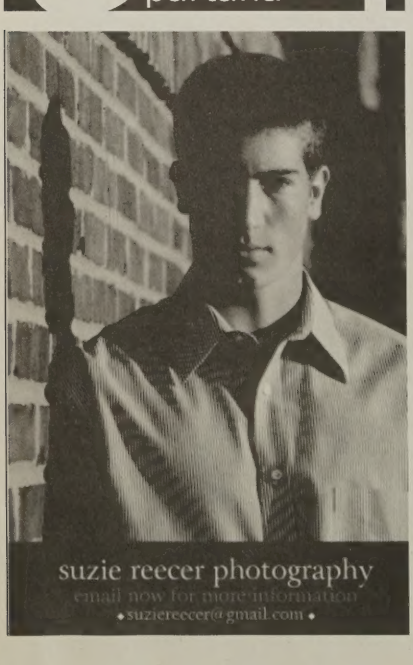


PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

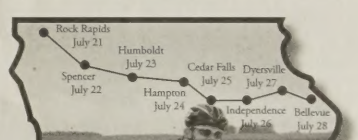
Top: Connor Andrews (9) concentrates on the ball he tossed up during one of his serves at the Homestead Invitational. Andrews has stepped into a crucial role of # 2 singles for the Spartan varsity team during his first high school season. Left: Danny Reecer (12) returns a hard hit from an opponent. Reecer, who is one of only three returning members of last year's state runner up team, leads this squad in the #1 doubles position. Both Andrews' and Reecer's performances under the stress of postseason competion will be key in the championship drive.



Cycling across Iowa

'07 graduate Keith Couture pedaled from border to border, spaned distance between Mississippi, Missouri Rivers on bike

By Nick Arnold
Sports Editor



Mention the acronym RAGBRAI to anyone and you'll probably get a response along the lines of, "Rag what?"

Or, ask anyone to describe Iowa and the response will probably involve "flat."

Mention both of them to Keith Couture ('07) and prepare to be informed about an event that encompasses ten-thousand people traversing Iowa, all on bikes. Couture has participated in the event for the past two years, taking a week out of his summer to ride the 470 mile stretch between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

The event's official name, Des Moines Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa, is quite a mouthful. As such, after the inaugural ride in 1973, it has simply been known as RAGBRAI. Its popularity has grown from a ride with two newspaper columnists in '73, to an event that now attracts riders from all over the country as well as celebrities such as Lance Armstrong. Armstrong, who is known for his seven consequtive Tour de France victories, said, "So this is RAGBRAI. I wasted all those Julys in France."

Due to the popularity of the "Greatest of American Bike Tours," event officials have been forced to place a 8,500 participant maximum for safetly reasons. All registered riders hopefuls are then entered into a lottery to determine who will be allowed to ride.

Couture has been biking since a young age. He attributes his love for the bike to his grandpa.

"My grandpa really began the 'biking legacy' of the family," Couture said. "He has been doing it his entire life."

The Couture family's passion for biking has led to the creation of their own team for RAGBRAI. Thanks to the humor of Couture's uncle, the teamed has been named Friends And Relatives Team, commonly referred to as FART. The team makes new jerseys and t-shirts each year that proudly display the acronym.

For Couture, this summer marked his third trip to a state that is not as flat as one may think. In fact, he admits the terrain is quite challenging.

"Just to set the record straight, the people who think Iowa is flat either don't know anything or have only driven through it," Couture said.

Couture may seem bold, but he is in fact telling the truth. RAGBRAI's six day ride encompasses fourteen-thousand feet of climb.

"That's half the height of Mount Everest," Couture said. "There are some hills that are so steep, it looks like you are going to hit a wall."

Even the easiest days of the ride prove to be no cakewalk.

"They're average climb ranges from nine-hundred to three-thousand feet a day," Couture said. "So even on easy days, you are still climbing quite a bit. And to make it tougher, the hardest days of the ride are the last two. Around the Mississippi River the hills can get pretty big."

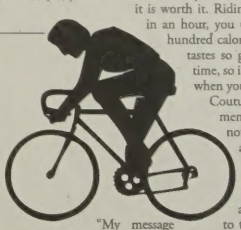
But the ride isn't about grueling climbs and serious competition. It's all about having fun. As such, every town the riders stop in make sure to show RABRAI participants a good time.

"It's not a grind at all," Couture said. "For the people of Fort Wayne, it's like the Three Rivers Festival in every town, but ten times as big. The towns go to great lengths to accommodate the riders and it is very well organized. It's pretty amazing."

> *"The people who think Iowa is flat either don't know anything or have only driven through it,"*
>
> **Keith Couture** ('07)
> cyclist

Though biking eliminates the expense of gas, it magnifies another–food. It reality, it costs more to fuel the human machine than a car.

"I usually blow about $200 on food each year," Couture said. "But it is worth it. Riding nineteen miles in an hour, you use around nine-hundred calories. But the food tastes so good at the same time, so it's not all that bad when you buy it."

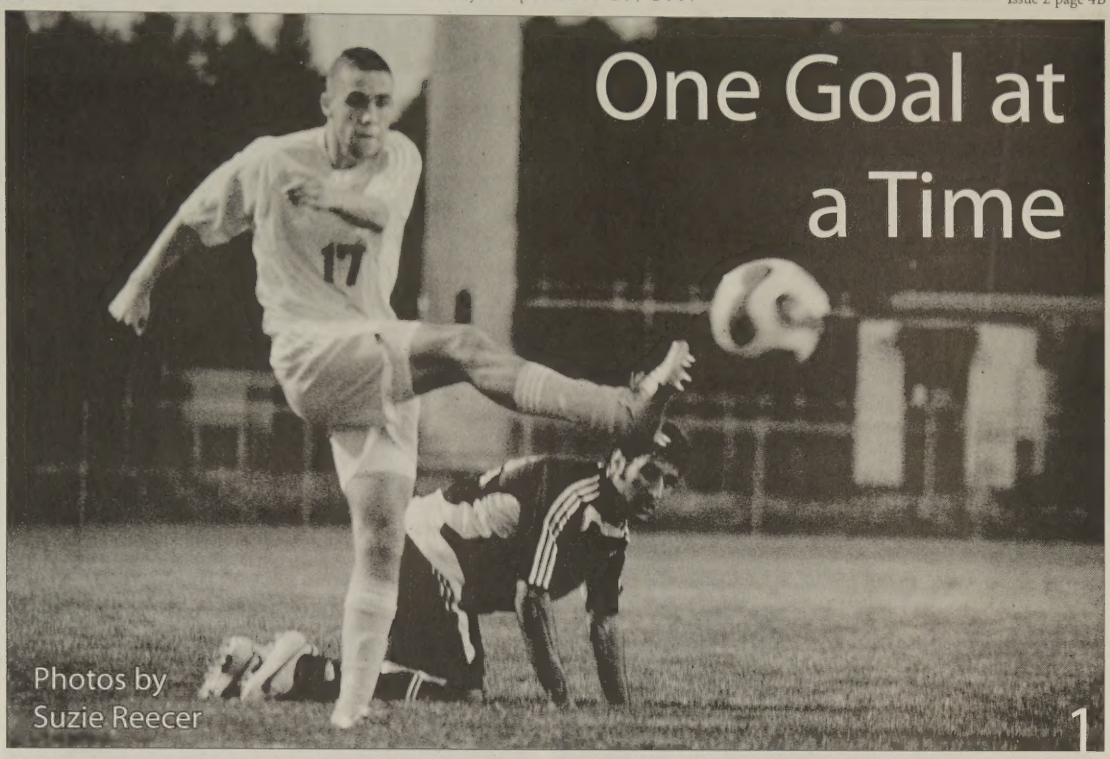


Couture's involvement in RAGBRAI is not for his benefit alone, however. He hopes to raise awareness within the community about cycling.

"My message to the local community is: bike!" Couture said. "Just get out and do it, I'm positive you'll enjoy it. There is one bike rack at the school. I think eight bikes were the most I ever saw on it. There is no reason more people shouldn't bike."

Well, maybe across the "hills" of Fort Wayne, also known as the Summit City. But up the fourteen-thousand foot climb across Iowa? Maybe after a little bit of training.

One Goal at a Time



Patrick Svitek
Writer

If anyone thought that the boys' soccer team's inaugural match versus Carmel would have been an indicator of the season to come, they'd be dead wrong.

"We dominated them the first half," Chris Gerber (12) said, "but [at the end] we broke down, we didn't know what to do."

With nine minutes on the clock, #1 ranked Carmel landed a penalty kick and scored two more goals, taking advantage of the team's frustration. The mental breakdown resulted in a 4-1 loss that player Eric Mendenhall (12) attributes to a misconception in the opposing team's skill level.

"They lost a lot of seniors last year," Mendenhall said, "so we thought we had a better chance."

Refusing to let the early loss become a forecast for later games, the team redeemed itself in the following three weeks. Improving their record to 8-1-2 following a tie against Noblesville during the Canterbury Invitational on Sept. 15, the team's confidence increased as the wins piled upon the single loss to Carmel. Captain John Seybert (12) credits the coaching staff of Paco Castillo and Andy Cohen with aiding in the timely bounce-back, but doesn't hesitate to address the situation with Homestead's trademark poise.

"We're really stacked," Seybert said. "The team has a lot of talent."

Although Bishop Dwenger and Snider tend to characterize Homestead's local competition, the team continually strives to measure up to Canterbury. Seybert, whose three-year presence on the varsity team has been witness to the episodic rivalry, admits that hype is thick whenever the Spartans takes the field against the team.

"They're a very competitive team," Seybert said, "it's a big thing."

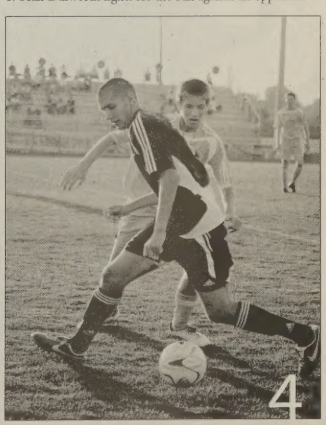
Then something happened unexpected by each and every player. On Saturday, Sept. 22, Homestead lost 1-0 to Canterbury in a season-defining moment looked forward to by fans and players alike. The game, previously touted by many as an effortless win (Gerber announced "we're going to smash them" a week before) was an intense match filled with hard fouls, according to senior captain Joe Stoffel (12).

"We probably surprised them the first half, but we couldn't finish," Stoffel said. "The ball didn't roll our way."

The Spartans still has a chance of meeting Canterbury at sectionals next month, but is currently focusing on using the shocking upset as what Stoffel calls a "building block" for the rest of the season. The senior is admittedly disappointed, but far from giving up on a team with a winning record that was recently dubbed a "Team to Watch" in an Indiana Soccer Coaches Association poll.

"We've got a game on Monday versus Norwell," Stoffel said, "and we're just going to come out again and go strong."

1. Kegan Harkenider (10) sends the ball flying down the field during a match against Bishop Dwenger on Thurs. 20.
2. Jon Seybert (12) defensds against an opposing player.
3. Brent Helton (10) battles for possesion of the ball with a Dwenger opponent.
4. Grant Welter (11) tries to steal the ball from a rival advancing down the field with the ball.
5. Chris Gerber (12) works to manuever around a Saint.
6. Sean Dulworth fights for the ball against an opponent.



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the Spartana

Friday, October 19, 2007

After weeks of preparation, band members are accustomed to a schedule where they

practice by day perform by night

By Hana Svetlovics
Writer

After three weeks of band camp, numerous practices and weekend competitions, the Spartan Alliance Marching Band is ready to travel to Indianapolis to compete in the Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA) State Finals.

This will be the 20th year that the band has marched to the RCA Dome. Last year, the band won third place, finishing behind rivals Avon High School and Lawrence Central High School. The band's most recent state title was awarded in 1996.

Homestead has placed behind Avon for the past four years, and the rivalry between the two bands seems to be motivation for the Spartans to play their way to the top this year.

"We don't have a local rival, but our biggest rival is Avon, the marching band dominators," member of the color guard Lauren Doust (11) said. "Every time at practice when we start to slack, [the directors] remind us that Avon is getting better."

Although it has been 11 years since the team's last state title, the band still has received numerous prestigious awards this year.

According to www.indianamarching.com, the Spartan Alliance Marching Band has received first place in best visual, best auxiliary, best percussion, best music, best drum major and best general effect at some point this season. Not a single scored category has eluded the band.

At the Spirit of Sound Invitational at Warren High School in Indianapolis, Homestead received first place in all possible categories except drum major, a category in which the band tied for first with Lafayette Jefferson High School.

In order to capture the impressive collection of awards, the band started preparing early.

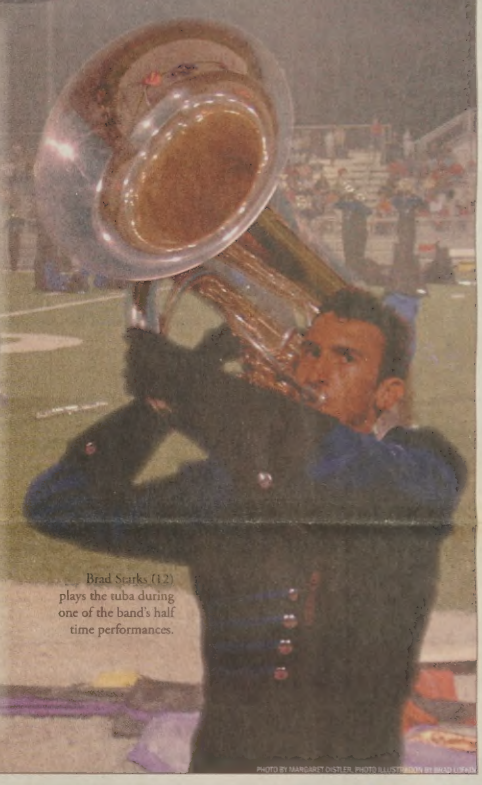
"Band camp started July 23rd, and lasted for three weeks. We were there from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon," tuba player Patrick McCarty (10) said.

Although state is the biggest competition of the year, practice times do not change in preparation for the event.

"Practices are hard enough as it is," band director Steve Barber said. "We just keep a normal schedule."

The band practices until five on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and from six until eight in the evening on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

SEE BAND on page 2A



Brad Starks (12) plays the tuba during one of the band's half time performances.

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER, PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY BRAD LUPKES

BRIEFS

INTERNATIONAL CLUB
The International Club encourages students to study cultural aspects of other countries. Members play games, listen to music, watch movies, eat food and take part in other cultural aspects from all over the world. Any student is welcome to join. A different country is picked to study at each meeting. Meetings for the club take place every other Thursday in room 929, from 2:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Meetings are not mandatory.

RED RIBBON WEEK
In honor of Red Ribbon Week, SADD members will be tying red ribbons to all of the cars in the parking lots on Monday, Oct. 22. Students are also encouraged to wear red on Wednesday, Oct. 24. Those wearing red will be eligible to enter a drawing during lunch for a $50 gift card to Jefferson Pointe.

AB NAMES NEW DIRECTOR
Cory Kelley has filled the position as the new director for Anonymous Blue, the show choir back up band.

PICTURE RETAKES IN
Any student who had their picture taken on Sept. 26 by Lifetouch can now pick up their portraits from Mr. Kuhn in room 620.

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Mirador lacks funding needed to print issues

By Celia Grundman
Writer

This year, payment for Homestead's literary and fine arts magazine, the *Mirador*, became optional for students rather than being included with class fees at registration. However, only about 200 students subscribed and the magazine is vastly under-funded. Currently, the *Mirador* has only enough money to print out the first issue, which will be distributed on Oct. 25.

For the past six years, the *Mirador* has been floundering as printing companies raise their prices each year and the student price remains the same. As a result, Rod Kuhn, the publications advisor, decided to raise the subscription price from $8 a year to $10. Due to the increase, the school administration decided to make the fee optional.

"We have enough [money] left over from last year for the first issue. After issue one, we'll be relying on the rest of the subscriptions we have," said Amy Young (12), the *Mirador* editor.

Only the students who paid the optional subscription fee at registration will receive the *Mirador*, which will be cutting down on its costs. While the magazine will still have the usual 32 to 48 pages, there will be less color and the magazine will possibly lose its glossy paper. To produce all four issues, the staff desperately needs more funding.

"We're looking into advertising and organizations that

SEE MIRADOR on page 2A

PHOTO BY KELLEY DICKMEYER

In the final stage of the Block Tea Party research assignment, Courtney Carlstrom (10) portrays her assigned historical figure, Harriet Tubman.

Low enrollment in Sophomore Block threatens future of class

By Ashley Heath
Writer

When students graduate from the well-known and perhaps infamous Sophomore Block class, they don their traditional "I Survived Sophomore Block" shirt, preaching the nearly fatal degree of difficulty of the course. Students will be comforted to know that the program will not be terminated as previously suggested, and that as long as a few conditions are met, the clever t-shirts will mark the hallways for years to come.

Sophomore Block has been a part of Homestead's curriculum for over 15 years. The class was introduced as part of the Lighthouse project and was a response to the observation that gifted and talented students learn differently: they see things globally, do not need as much practice and tend to think "outside of the box."

To help them actualize their learning potential, the Block program covers the same material and meets the same standards as the AP US History and Honors English 10 classes, but is organized differently. Topics are covered according to their thematic order instead of chronologically.

"It really challenges students, even the smarter kids who are used to getting through class without much work," Sanjay Gunashekhar (12) said. "It teaches kids good study skills that could really be useful in college."

The schedule is also organized differently, as the two classes are taught simultaneously. Jim Schmidt, the history teacher of the Sophomore Block course, espouses that the 90 minute format results in a number of advantages.

"I think one of the biggest benefits for the AP program is that we can simulate actual testing conditions," Schmidt said. "[T]he [Document-Based Question section] is a 60 minute writing, a normal 47 minute period class can't recreate that for students."

SEE BLOCK on page 2A

New grading scale impacts students

By Katherine DeRosa
News Editor

As the first nine weeks of the new school year comes to a close, students face a major change in the grading scale. In order to promote consistency, the administration has standardized the grading scale for all classes. The new scale is somewhat of an average between the grading scales from past years. It is slightly easier to achieve a higher grade in all classes except for math, honors and AP courses.

Some feel that the new grading scale discourages students from taking AP classes.

"I think it makes sense to have a consistent grading scale if our school weights courses based upon rigor," Connie Christophersen, English Department Chair, said.

Some wondered as to whether the change would have an affect on enrollment for AP classes.

"I believe using a weighted scale for honors and AP courses would have a positive effect on enrollment in challenging classes," Christophersen said.

SEE GRADING SCALE on page 2A

FALL PLAY PREVIEW

Night of January 16th

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

Katie O'Keefe (12) and Steve Batska (10) help construct the jury box.

This year's fall play, Night of January 16th, is a mystery that takes the audience through a murder trial. The defendant, Karen Andre (played by Flor Ortega (10)), is on trial for the murder of her ex-boyfriend, while District Attorney Flint (Katie O'Keefe (11)) argues Andre's guilt. The wife of the defendant, Nancy Lee Faulkner (Kate Taylor (12)), is represented by Defense Attorney Stevens (Greg Kyes-Myland (12)). The audience is captivated by the trial as the crowd ultimately decides Andre's fate, performances on November 8, 9 and 10.

District continues to come up short on teacher diversity

Patrick Svitek
Writer

Marta Lute knew she wanted to be a teacher since elementary school.

While working on her Bachelor's degree in Telecommunication at Columbia College in Chicago, she taught and directed a program for special needs students. After taking time off to raise her children and relocate, she resumed her profession in 1998 at Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) as a substitute teacher. Often covering teachers' positions that were on maternity leaves, Lute eventually found herself working exclusively in special education classrooms. Five years later, she applied to be a Severe Disabilities Teacher at the district's flagship educational institute, a school that continually places above state and national averages in SAT scores and has become a regional model for scholastic development.

Today, she is one of 120 teachers at Homestead High School. Furthermore, she is one of only three Hispanic teachers at a school comprised of an overwhelming majority of white teachers.

Homestead has become an ongoing example of an issue that reaches far beyond the limits of Aboite Township. According to the Indiana Department of Education, only five percent of the state's teachers were from minority groups last school year. The most recent instance of the percentage of minority teachers in Indiana topping six percent was nearly two decades ago during the 1987-88 school year.

When Lute chose to teach within Southwest Allen County School nearly 15 years ago, she estimated the faculties were just as diverse as they are now. Comparatively, Fort Wayne Community Schools has a minority teacher population of eight percent. Un-attracted to the size and constant traveling required to teach at Fort Wayne Community Schools, she admittedly waived for the SACS district because she "didn't want to be sent all over the city."

"I knew this was a wealthier district," Lute said. "I would be able to provide the equipment and items necessary to provide a good education for my students."

The National Education Association's Oct. 2004 report, "Assessment of Diversity in America's Teaching Staff," states that minority teachers tend to be employed in districts where they are proportionately represented through the student body. 88 percent of students are white at Homestead, leaving 12 percent of population to be accounted for by non-white teachers. Even the total minority teacher population of Southwest Allen County Schools, currently one African-American and the aforementioned three Hispanics, could not justify for those 255 Asian, African-American, Hispanic and Multi-racial Homestead students, let alone the whole district.

Dan Jaeger, a white teacher who has taught German at Homestead for 13 years, believes that although SACS struggles to find diverse teachers, there is a larger factor contributing toward the problem.

"[With race and ethnicity set aside], it's a battle between coming to Fort Wayne or Indy when hiring teachers," Jaeger said.

In the past, efforts have been made to attract a diverse range of staff members to the district, including direct hiring at the college level and the publication of advertisements in minority recruitment magazines. Such methods, however, were halted after they "did not provide results," according to SACS Human Resources Director, Phyllis Davis.

"We continue to encourage [diversity]," Davis said. She also notes that despite the district's teaching staff not showing signs of ethnic variety, SACS continues to hire diverse employees in supervisory, janitorial, and secretarial positions.

Indian-American student Rahul Gupta (12) has attended Southwest Allen County Schools his whole life and has never once encountered a non-white teacher. He remains unaffected by the lack of ethnic representation on staff.

"I haven't found diversity on staff," Gupta said, "but it is surprising that the school is not made up of more foreign teachers."

Lute, in the midst of her third year as a special education teacher, admits that she did not consider the ethnic range of Homestead's staff when picking a school to begin teaching again. Homestead was the best learning environment for her to hone her former teaching ability, regardless of whether there were other Hispanics in the break room or not. Her mindset continues to reflect this ideal.

"It took me a long time to get here," Lute said, "and I'm here because of the teaching I do."

BAND Continued from page 1A

"You see the people in band all the time, and they become your family pretty much. You see them everyday except Sunday," McCarty said.

Most of the band's competitions require traveling to every corner of the state, but on Oct. 6, Homestead hosted the Fall Festival Contest. 26 schools from four different classes came to compete on Homestead's turf and were scored by judges from all over the country.

"We had a gentleman who hired the judges, and at this competition we had judges from Ohio, Texas, Indiana, Pennsylvania and Florida," Barber said.

The contest opened with Woodlan High School performing in class D at 9:30 a.m. The class A competition had to be cancelled due to the day's extreme heat.

While visiting bands continued to march, the Spartan Alliance Marching Band practiced for their exhibition performance that was held later in the afternoon.

"Exhibition is when we perform and get judged, but we're not competing for a place," flutist Emma Haverstock (10) said. "We still get scored, but we don't get awards."

Although band members are not throwing footballs into an end zone or spiking volleyballs over a net, they are putting in large amounts of time and effort; a commitment that rivals that of any other sports team.

"It's a lot harder than it looks, but it's a lot easier than I thought it would be," Haley Bolinger (9) said.

Due to the band and color guard's popularity, freshman are often designated as alternates and are forced to share a spot with another member and do not march in every event.

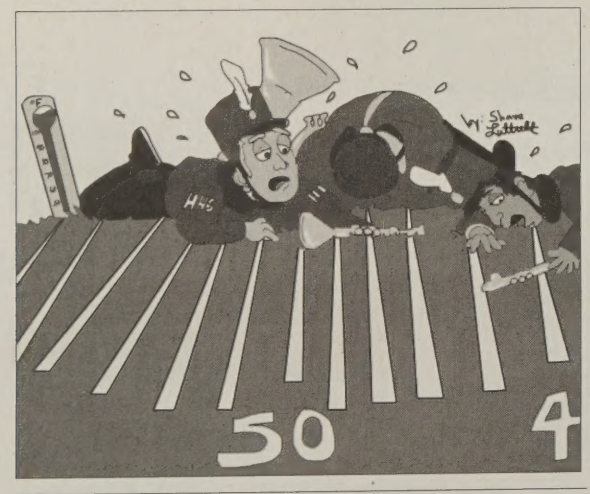
"I was an alternate last year, but I get my own spot this year," Haverstock said. "[The directors] just try to pick people that will work out together. One alternate marches mostly football games and some competitions."

While some band members have to worry about which shows they will play in, other members focus on the changes to this year's performance.

"This year is different because we sing and chant in our show," Danny Nicolosi (12) said. "It is hard work, but rewarding in the end."

Although band is a serious commitment, members agree that it is a worthwhile experience.

"I really love band. It's a huge part of my life," Doust said. "You meet great people through band and you get closer to friends you were close to before. It's fun to be part of a team. It's not a single person thing, it's a team thing."



GRADING Continued from page 1A

As an AP teacher, Christophersen confirms that the grading scale will have no effect on her grading rubric because it is set by the College Board.

Emily Bruce (12) agrees with Christophersen. As an AP student Bruce has noticed a decrease in her grades this year.

"It's unfortunate that the students who are taking harder classes that take more work to get an A are being forced to work even harder to hold that grade," Bruce said. "There is not really much motivation to take hard classes because the grading scale is the same for everyone. I have always had the belief that AP classes should be weighted so the students who are working extra hard can be set aside from the rest. I believe that the new grading scale dumbs down the standard of the school."

Other students feel that the idea of consistency is important, but that the grading scale is still too rigorous.

"A 90% should be an A-," Ross Heckber (12) said. "We should keep our grading scale consistent with that of other schools so it's fair when applying for college."

Math teacher, Brian Nicholson, does not think the grading scale will be a bad change in the long run, and believes that it is important to have consistency within the school.

"Education is constantly changing and teachers just have to make adjustments," Nicholson said. "[The teachers] in the math department are making very close observations of the data."

The data will be monitored to detect major changes in grades.

Some students, however, are not affected by the change.

"I don't really care about the grading scale change," Carolyn Mutton (10) said. "I guess I'm just not really in to checking my grades."

Senior Katie Buschman agrees with Mutton.

"I didn't even know the grading scale changed," Buschman said.

For most, the effects of the new grading scale are seen not in the slight percentage change in grade cut-offs but in the principle of the grading here at Homestead. By setting more rigorous standards for AP grades, students are indirectly discouraged from taking advanced placement courses. As the school year continues and inevitable changes are made, students are left with a disconcerting thought.

"There is not much I can do about the new system," Bruce said. "I hope the administration realizes that by changing the grading scale they are encouraging students be mediocre."

BLOCK Continued from page 1A

Schmidt contends that there is a direct correlation between this unique setup and success on the exam.

"I believe our students are much more prepared as far as the practice of actually doing the essay writing that is necessary for the outcome on the AP exam," Schmidt said.

The numbers support Schmidt's argument. 100 percent of the Block students took the AP US History exam last year, a test that is usually taken by juniors and seniors. 92 percent of them received a score of 3 or higher. The national distribution of scores 3 and higher was only 53.2 percent.

Students agree that the class prepared them well for not only the AP exam, but other endeavors as well.

"I learned a lot in Sophomore Block: how to budget my time, how to divide assignments into manageable pieces, how to write good in-class essays, how to see history as a complex process of social, political, and economic forces and not just a series of dates and wars," Grace Lundergan ('07) said.

Authorities have determined that for every 36 to 40 students that sign up for Sophomore Block, one two-period class will be allotted. Typically, two classes are scheduled, meaning that to maintain the current configuration, 72 to 80 students would need to enroll. This year there is a total of 46 students in the class, slightly less than last year's 52. Schmidt admits that although the class has been recognized as a very productive program, what it needs most at the current moment is enrollment.

Upperclassmen who are interested in helping to maintain the program are encouraged to talk to freshmen about taking the class.

MAGAZINE Continued from page 1A

fund this sort of thing and discussing prices with New Haven Print," Young said.

So far, advertising has not been successful and student subscriptions are vital for the continuation of the *Mirador*. 600 student subscriptions would be in the best interest of the magazine, which requires approximately $20,000 each year to print the usual four issues.

The staff is also looking at adding outside help in order to increase funding.

"It's possible to hire the business department or a business association for advertising, giving them a percentage of the proceeds from the advertising," Kuhn said.

If advertising improves and student subscriptions increase, the *Mirador* will most likely stay afloat for at least another year. The *Mirador* staff is determined to pull through the year and maintains an optimistic outlook.

"As a worst case scenario," Young said, "we'll have to cut out an issue."

The *Mirador* is also making student submissions a large part of the magazine and has accepted 60 pictures already. The staff accepts other types of submissions as well, including drawings, poems and stories.

"We try to incorporate something from every student who submits," Young said.

Continuing with a theme for each issue, the first issue will have the theme of "impressions." Broad themes are chosen so that a variety of articles can be written to appeal to all types of students at Homestead.

With the lack of funds this year, it is unlikely that the *Mirador* will be a publication next year.

"The *Mirador* will live on in some form, whether as a supplement to the *Spartana* or as a yearly magazine," Kuhn said.

For this year, the *Mirador* staff is determined to print all four issues despite a serious lack of funding. Student subscriptions are crucial to the success of the magazine.

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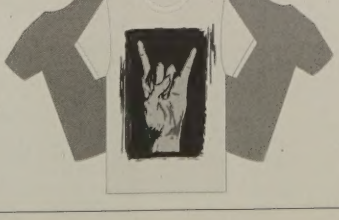

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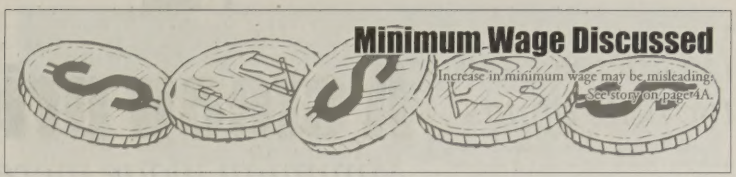
Opinion



Minimum Wage Discussed

Increase in minimum wage may be misleading; see story on page 4A.

Friday, October 19, 2007

The cost of becoming hooked

Random drug testing's system is seen as "not so random" and "flawed"

By Ian Strelec
Writer

Random drug testing. Back in the '05-'06 school year, it was instituted as yet another method of cracking down on the student body. The passes go out, students come in to the discipline office, the bathroom is used and the leftovers are analyzed.

But there are several details that seriously detract from the whole process. First, the only people that are ever actually drug tested are the ones who either a) participate in after-school activities or b) drive to school. This means that you could, in theory, go four years in this school without being randomly drug tested. That is hardly fair, don't you think?

I mean, really, there are going to be plenty of people in this school who don't participate in after-school activities. How is it even remotely practical to only apply this to a portion of the school?

Then there is the fact that in a school as competitive as this one, that a large number of the students are smart enough to get around the drug testing. It is not like they search students before letting them into the bathroom, so it cannot be that difficult to sneak in a clean sample if you have any kind of warning. I have heard it said that it needs to be room temperature, but it's not exactly like a locker isn't.

So the way I see it, random drug testing is a flawed system. It is not even close to an accurate sample of the school, and from what I hear, students are devilishly good at dodging it when they want to. So what to do?

Well, the rumor is (let me stress rumor) that drug testing will be losing its funding, and debate will start on if other sources should be found to continue it. I really think that we should not. The system is simply ineffective and unnecessary. We have a permanent drug dog, so drugs on campus should not be much of an issue. And ultimately, it does not seem to me like it should be the school's job to worry about what kids are doing off-campus anyway. Unless, of course, Homestead really IS the police institution a growing number seem to think it is.

So, solutions. The simplest, I think, would be to just abolish the system altogether. Of course, there will probably be some disgruntled parent or other who insists it is an effective use of funding, even though it could probably be better spent on, oh, I don't know, summer school? Enough textbooks for classes? That type of thing?

For a compromise then, let's improve the system. Require students to sign the waiver when they register for school! But wait…that one is against the law. Since school is kind of required, at least until age 16, the school is not allowed to force people to allow that invasion of privacy. Honestly, that is just one more argument against it. It is an invasion of privacy and forcing the kids who opt to participate in after-school events to be subjected to this so that they can be a part of band, or football, or theater, is not fair to them.

I need, I think, to come back to the most important argument one more time. Investigating student's lives outside school is not the school's business. Are the drugs being searched for against the law? Yes. But the school is not a police office. It is not any kind of law enforcement agency. And spending valuable school funding on a program that fails to even fully perform its intended function is not a good choice.

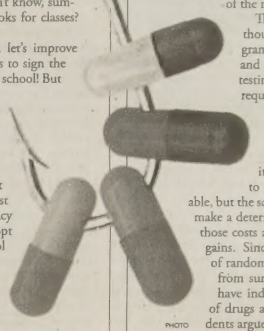


PHOTO WWW.YOURSDAILY.COM

Recent drug testing statistics prove a decline in the misuse of substances

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

Drug testing is hated by most students. They see it as an annoyance, an inconvenience and some even claim it is a waste of money. That last point of contention, however, is raised only by the misinformed among the student body. Drug testing at Homestead has come courtesy of grant money that Homestead has received in order to conduct drug testing and also work with statistical analysis of the results.

That is soon to change though, as the three year grant will end this year and a continuation of drug testing in the future would require funding from taxpayer dollars. The program's costs are high, and the program would be altered from its current form in order to make those costs bearable, but the school board will have to make a determination as to whether those costs are offset by substantial gains. Since the implementation of random drug testing, statistics from surveys and other sources have indicated a decline in use of drugs and alcohol. While students argue that drugs and alcohol are as prevalent as ever, the statistics are undeniable.

While it is natural for students to feel animosity toward drug testing, the program's goal is not to catch students using drugs and alcohol. According to proponents, the program simply is intended to give students another reason to say no when confronted with drugs. It is thought that the prospect of losing privileges such as driving or participating in sports and clubs will be sufficient motivation to keep students from drinking or doing drugs.

Although it may not be the goal of the program to catch students, those with positive tests are given education and tools to end their irresponsible decisions. Students can either lose privileges for an extended period or can be suspended for a shorter time and attend an education course. Students are not just punished, but also receive the help they need.

Drug testing has been criticized by students as not random and not effective. First of all, the testing is random. Everyone in the pool has a number; a computer chooses random students to be tested. Done. Second of all, students who test positive are not exactly paraded through the hallways. Students' results are confidential, so students may not see the effects of testing first-hand. These criticisms of the system surely cannot provide much of a case to end the program.

Ultimately, the decision about testing will come down to the almighty dollar. The school board will decide whether testing is effective enough to warrant its price tag. But before a decision is made, we should examine other school systems in a similar situation. Other schools have suspended drug testing programs and seen subsequent increases in levels of use. Drug testing clearly is an effective deterrent to illegal substance use. And students may have to think twice about the decisions they make with a program in place.

Drug testing has produced mixed reactions and been an object of annoyance for students. But statistics indicate that it is having an effect on the choices students are making. There will always be students who choose to use drugs and alcohol, testing or not. But for students who are pressured and flustered when confronted with the choice of whether to drink or use drugs, random testing may provide the impetus they need to make a constructive choice and "just say no."

Ed board addresses pleasure reading

Reading has become a lost pastime among most high school students

Reading is the foundation of education. It allows for discovery and exchange of new ideas, for expression of emotion and for explanation and description. Although reading in text books is often assigned, and English classes require reading novels and plays, students rarely read all that they are assigned. What's more, reading is seen by most students as a chore, and reading for pleasure has all but disappeared among most high school students.

In a world of television, iTunes, video games and Facebook, students are inundated with products and services for leisure. A result of this is that students would rather watch *The Hills* or update their Facebook profile rather than sit down and read a book for fun. The perception of reading as nerdy also contributes to its unpopularity. Students may read books assigned for class, but their free time is consumed by other activities. Reading as an assignment is work, not an activity to be enjoyed.

Theories abound as to why teens no longer read. Among the most popular is that reading requires more effort than sitting in front of a television. It is much easier to sit and watch television, watching a story and seeing it unfold compared to having to be actively engaged and imagining the story.

Others say that reluctance to read stems from the perception that reading is "un-cool," and that reading is not accepted socially by teens. Students often say they don't enjoy reading, and at that point reading becomes a lost cause. Enjoyment is the basis of reading for pleasure, and without it reading becomes work rather than fun. Many teens recognize the importance of reading in education, but this recognition does not translate to more students reading for fun.

Defenders of teenagers say that teens are reading more than people think. While they may not reading substantial literature, involvement in blogging and other internet sources may not be traditional, but still requires teens to read. And reading is not absent among teens. Some do read books for enjoyment, but these teens are not among the majority, fewer than 50% of teens read for pleasure and teens spend more than three times as much time watching television compared to reading.

CARTOON BY SHANE LUTTRELL

Many experts say that kids will start to read more if they are able to see reading as more than a chore, if they are reading about things that are relevant and interesting to their lives. If teens are allowed to read what they choose, they are more likely to read as a leisure activity. Reading becomes more exciting when students pursue ideas that they find interesting.

Popular books such as the *Harry Potter* series are a testament to this. Though they are not great literature, the books were entertaining and widely read by teens. The books appealed to teens' imagination and provided an escape. But the seven books in the Potter series are unique; no other series has had so many teens reading of their own accord.

Teens live in an increasingly electronic, gadget-driven world. They have laptops, many households have three or four televisions and cell phones are pervasive. Despite these modern conveniences, reading cannot be ignored. Reading can be a vehicle for imagination and discovery, the type that can't be matched by wall posts or music videos.

On the other hand, just take a trip to Mrs. Johnson's room during a Thursday morning etymology class to see a group of students truly dedicated to reading. True, some are taking this for the sole purpose of boosting their SAT score but there are those who take this class for the joy of learning.

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Profanity may appear in the *Spartana* with the approval of the adviser, but only in cases of direct quotations, or if it is necessary for the clarity. Material which is libelous or obscene and could cause a substantional and material disruption as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

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Staff members support The First Amendment rights and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. students will be assisted by the adviser in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

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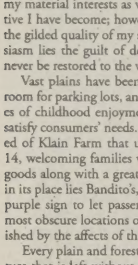
Do not overlook the little things



By Kara Hackett
Life Editor

I am an old-fashioned person. I enjoy family time, visits to small, close-knit towns, and I am more familiar with "oldies" songs than with today's popular music. What most people view as trash, like an old, rusty pick-up truck or a rickety shack, I see as a well-worn-in treasure, encompassed by a warm, beloved aura acquired by many years of use. Perhaps the most peculiar of all my quirks, however, is my often overwhelming love for the countryside and all that it entails. Unfortunately, it has recently come to my attention that I may be alone that prospect. Rising taxes are not the only drawbacks of Aboite's recent annexation into Fort Wayne, expanding retail markets have also taken a toll on the suburb's natural splendor, making it merely an extension of the bustling city.

Do not get me wrong. Many times even I have been lured into the cleaver traps of our current society, becoming excited about the latest installments in our growing city. Personally, I cannot wait to shop at the new Target store that is currently under construction along Illinois road, and I cannot help but notice several new strip malls being constructed that might appeal to my material interests as well. No matter how anticipative I have become; however, I cannot help but notice the gilded quality of my satisfaction. Under my enthusiasm lies the guilt of destroying something that will never be restored to the way it was meant to be.

Vast plains have been cleared and leveled to make room for parking lots, and beloved farmlands and places of childhood enjoyment have been transformed to satisfy consumers' needs. Every October, I am reminded of Klain Farm that used to reside along Highway 14, welcoming families with a fresh assortment of fall goods along with a great selection of pumpkins. Now, in its place lies Bandito's, proudly displaying its vibrant purple sign to let passer-bys know that not even the most obscure locations of the city can remain unblemished by the affects of the growing city.

Every plain and forest that is cleared and every creature that is left without a home is a manmade flaw in nature, all too often overlooked. We were not put on this world with department stores and supermarkets;

At night, it is even more magical to see the fireflies dance and twinkle like stars above the tall forest grass.

Kara Hackett
Life Editor

we were put here amongst nature herself, designed to live in harmony with the earth and its creatures.

Unfortunately, as our perspectives continue to narrow to merely our own concerns, we forget those of the world around us. Narrow perspectives have devastating results for nature and mankind alike. Neglecting to consider the habitats of local species forces them to relocate to public venues. In fact, there have been several reports of coyotes lurking in neighborhood additions due to the lack of natural habitat. Thus, by destroying natural habitats to make room for cultural expansion, society is condemning itself as well those it victimizes.

Statistics show that in the year 1987 the number of shopping centers in the United States (35,563) surpassed the number of high schools. Regrettably, this is only a glimpse at our country's inclination to place material goods above everything else in our lives, even our own educations. Perhaps the most devastating fact about our society is that, of all consumers surveyed across the country, only twenty-five percent were in search of a specific item. Thus, the pratfall of our materialistic society lies in our confusion concerning what we truly desire. People do not know what they want. Everyone craves contentment and happiness, yet we have been misled by retailers and fast food chains to believe that the key to our desires lies within our pocketbooks. The idea that money can determine everything in life has plagued the country. We are losing precious land simply to give us more options on how to spend our most prized, possession, our money.

America used to be a land known for natural magnificence. In fact, in the song, "America the Beautiful," writer, Katharine Lee Bates, attributes the majority of America's splendor to the beauty of the land. Unfortunately, those beloved "fruited plains" and "amber waves of grain" have been savagely destroyed and turned into housing additions, popular shopping centers, and fast food chains. The natural majesty of our environment is endangered, and if construction rates and material interest continue to increase, it could become extinct.

In a world full of new ideas and cultural developments, I find myself stuck in the past, desiring to live a life free of the exploitation of my surroundings. As much as I take pleasure in shopping and the joys of being a modern consumer, my old-fashioned values and love of nature are constantly resurfacing, convincing me to reassess what is most important in my life. One of the places closest to my heart is my grandparent's backyard. Secluded and surrounded by woods on all four sides, the house sits amidst the glory of its environment, seeming to be a part of nature itself. Although it has grown old with time, the house is illumined with a breath-taking glow whenever the sun beams filter through the tree branches and land on that hill in just the right way. At night, it is even more magical to see the fireflies dance and twinkle like stars above the tall forest grass, with the fragile, black fingers of the trees stretching high into the dark blue sky behind. However, perhaps the most spectacular aspect of the scenery is how much it reminds me of myself and life in general.

Behind the swaying grass and beyond the tall trees, there is a stream. Constantly flowing through the forest brush, it rushes past my feet as I stand on the riverbank. Sometimes I picture society as that rushing river, full of water that was once clean, but now runs brown with filth, always in a hurry to get somewhere, yet never going anywhere at all. It pays no leave to the beauty of the forest nor the twinkling of the flies, it simply continues rushing past me, eroding the precious soil of nature from beneath my feet.

A steep price to pay

Minimum wage increase may not be as lucrative in the end

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

Working high school students around the nation may have found themselves with a little more money in their pockets since summer. Legislation signed into law this passed May will increase minimum wage by $.70 each summer until 2009 when jobs will pay a minimum of $7.25 an hour. But before students start rejoicing over their new-found wealth, a moment's reflection on the real impact of this increase is warranted.

Minimum wage is a prime example of deceptive legislation: appearing to do good but instead having negative effects.

Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

Economically speaking, minimum wage is classified as a "price floor." In other words, minimum wage sets a price that is above what the market would normally produce. Normally, price floors are used to benefit the producer of a good, ensuring that the price of the good is high enough. In the case of minimum wage, workers are given pay above what they would naturally be awarded without government intervention. At the risk of getting too technical, a price floor intersects the supply and demand curves for a good at different locations. This means that demand for a good at the new higher price is lower than the amount producers are willing and able to supply at that price. In terms of minimum wage, this means that demand for workers is lower than the supply of people willing to work. Therefore, a surplus of workers results, with more people willing to work than are demanded by employers. This surplus of workers could have a big impact on working high school students.

A large number of minimum wage jobs are performed by high school aged workers. While the minimum wage increase was intended to help low-income families, many of these workers don't work at minimum wage. Therefore, in essence, high-school workers are largely the beneficiary of the pay increase. But businesses will be less likely to higher minimum wage workers now as they will have to pay them more. The surplus of labor that results will make it harder for high school students to get jobs. So before students begin to celebrate their good fortune, they should realize that the job search will be harder now that employers will be more hesitant to hire low-wage workers.

Other effects naturally results form an artificial minimum wage increase. Because minimum wage workers are now making more money, it is only logical that other workers will also want an increase in their pay. If employers are forced to accommodate these workers with a pay raise of their own, then the employers will need some way to recoup the losses that result from having to pay higher wages to workers. The natural result is higher prices in order to maintain profits. Thus, any increase in wages is offset by higher prices of goods. This idea is attributed to economist David Ricardo, and is known as the "Iron Law of Wages." Even a basic background in economics however, is sufficient to understand the negative effects of government intervention in the economy.

Minimum wage is a prime example of deceptive legislation: appearing to do good but instead having negative effects. While the idea of higher wages may seem on the surface like a way to protect America's lower-income families, it is in fact harmful to minimum wage workers, including a large number of high school and college age workers. The legislation creates a surplus of people willing to work, limits the number of jobs available, and the increase in wages is naturally offset by an increase in prices to cover the higher costs of companies. So although high school workers may appeared to grow richer since a pay raise this summer, they must know that this pay raise comes with a steep price.

Myanmar conflicts remain unresolved

By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

Many people do not see Fort Wayne as full of ethnic and racial diversity; however, there is a large population of refugees from Myanmar that have come to this city. Recent strikes against Military junta in Myanmar are signs of growth in immigration.

Nearly 3,500 refugees have come to Fort Wayne over the past 20 years, due to cheap housing and supply of unskilled labor. Fort Wayne holds more refugees from Myanmar than any other city in the United States. Last Monday, October 2, several of these refugees gathered in the evening at the Courthouse Green.

The group chanted, "We will not surrender (in Burmese)," and held up signs promoting international aide for the people of Myanmar. Due to the political strife that is currently taking place in Myanmar, Fort Wayne is expecting more than 300 refugees to settle here this year.

Protests have plagued Myanmar for the past two months. Conflict originally arose from a 500 percent increase in diesel prices, which enraged the citizens of the country. The military junta needed to raise money to pay off their debts, these increased prices, and the past decades of struggle against the military junta has lead to several protests over the last two months.

One of the Monk lead protests included 20,000 people. The government intervened when the group started to head toward the house in which Suu Kyi was being detained. Suu kyi is the leader of the Democratic Party in Myanmar, and has been held under house arrest for the past twelve out of eighteen years. In mid September hundreds of Monks marched down the streets, even in rain. They were surrounded by hundreds of Myanmar citizens who have a held a deep indifference with the government.

One Japanese photographer was shot dead when taking pictures of an antigovernment demonstration. Another Buddhist monk was seen floating face down in a river.

Yogesh Jonna
Writer

In response to the strikes the military used violent actions with bullets, tear gas and other methods. On September 25 an emergency law outlawed any gathering of over five people. The death toll cause by the military has been stated three hundred by most sources, with several thousand detained. However, the military junta claims the death toll only to be ten people. When the conflict is over it will be impossible to have real number of how many died. In Myanmar the dead are cremated, so there will not be any form of burial.

In one account, the military open fired at a high school as the school was letting out, killing near a hundred students and parents. One Japanese photographer, Kenji Nagai, was shot dead when taking pictures of an antigovernment demonstration in Yangon, Myanmar. Another Buddhist monk was seen floating face down in a river.

Silence lurks in the countries empty pagodas. The US embassy has reported that several of them are being barricaded by the military. The military has ordered most of the monks that were not detained to leave their pagodas and go to their home towns. The few that are still open to the public have only a few monks. The military started to make arrests at night. Several men and women have been taken from their homes at around 3 am to be questioned or detained. Recently however the military forces have removed several roadblocks, moving their posts into more obscure corners.

Myanmar has been ruled by a military junta since 1962. For the first time the country had free elections in 1989, the Democratic Party won in a landslide. However the military junta led by Than Shwe refused to hand over power of the country, and has continued to enforce their rule today. The democratic uprising in those times caused the deaths of around 3,000 people by notable sources.

Although conflict in Myanmar has started to recede, the ultimate cause of the problems are still in effect. These protests and strikes will continue as long as the military junta remains in power. The conflict will cause an increase in refugees from Myanmar settling in Fort Wayne, and who knows, maybe even some in our school district.

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Life

Friday, October 19, 2007

Students work with local community theater

Play touches on sensitive subjects, students behind the scenes

Luke Chase
Editor in Chief

With a thirst for drama and knack for technology, a handful of students have found a niche at First Presbyterian Theatre (FPT). Each of them showcase their own special skills and gain first hand experience of what goes on behind the scenes of a thought-provoking, emotional drama.

Set in the early 1990's *Twilight of the Gold's* will have you laughing one minute and gasping in disbelief the next.

When a Jewish family is expecting their first child, the husband insists on having an experimental genetic test done by his employer, the results of which state the fetus has a 90% chance of growing to be a homosexual man. In a turbulent time plagued by prejudice and just after the height of the AIDS epidemic, Suzanne and her husband have a choice to make, do they bring a child into a world that will never understand him, into a life that can never be happy, or do they terminate the pregnancy? Told through the eyes of Suzanne's homosexual brother, David, this is a show that will force its audience to come to grips with their own morals and beliefs in the value of all members of society and the way we treat each other.

After seeing how the world has treated her brother, Suzanne's decision is swayed back and forth by David's experiences, the opinions of her overbearing parents and an information saturated society.

Kelly McMeen (12) is a veteran to the theatre both on and off the stage. She has worked the light board at FPT for their production of *The Odd Couple* and is currently doing so for *Twilight of the Gold's*, as well as being stage manager. McMeen is just a talented on stage as behind the scenes and appeared in the 2005 production of *Two Gentlemen of Verona* as an outlaw and as a servant in the 2007 production of *The Merchant of Venice*. All together McMeen has participated in seven FPT productions and two Homestead Drama Department productions.

"This is the second show in a row that I've done at FPT... so it's rather draining to have been at the theatre for almost every weekend since early September," McMeen said.

Above: Kelly McMeen (left 12) looks on as Joel Scribner (production manager) makes some last minute adjustments to light cues.
Right: John Topsoglou (left 12) and Hali Bickford (right 11) make some adjustments to the projector before dress rehearsal.

Throughout the show, the audience will be presented with colorful projections on the back of the stage to help enhance the mood at any given moment. Hali Bickford (11) and John Topsoglu (12) are responsible for casting these upon the stage.

Using Sony-Vegas movie studio 8.0, Bickford and Topsoglu adjusted the speed of the projections and set the color to match the mood.

"I have always loved technology, so it gives me gratification to be able to use it where it has an application other than school or leisure," Topsoglu said.

Zan Giese (12) coordinates all the props on stage during the performances as sole member of the backstage crew.

The music played throughout this performance was all edited and prepared by Rebekah Sims (12). The sound board is operated during performances by Luke Chase (12).

This production has also served for a happy reunion of students and teacher, as former Homestead Drama Teacher, Ed Koczergo, is directing this performance and has recruited former students to help run the show behind the scenes.

The FPT offers an enriching artistic experience before, after and during the intermission the audience can enjoy a gallery of art for sale in the lobby and after all Friday night performances, there is a post-show discussion about the controversial topics presented in the show.

"Every human being is a tapestry. You pull one thread... and the art unravels. You end up staring at the walls."

David Gold
Twilight of the Golds

Director
Ed Koczergo

Stage Manager
Kelly McMeen

Production Manager
Joel D. Scribner

Projection Design
Hali Bickford & John Topsoglou

Sound
Luke Chase

Music Design
Rebekah Sims

Backstage Crew
Zan Giese

Actors

David Gold	Bob Ahlersmeyer
Suzanne Gold-Stein	Samantha Teter
Rob Stein	Richard Marchbanks
Phyllis Gold	Katie Black
Walter Gold	Bob Haluska

Showtimes

Friday, October 19, 26	8:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 20, 27	8:00 p.m.
Sunday October 21	2:00 p.m.

First Prsbyterian Theatre
300 W. Wayne St
260-422-6329

AP Scholar Awards

Last year, 94 students earned the designation of AP Scholar in recognition of their exceptional achievement on the college-level Advanced Placement Program (AP) Exams.

Only 18% of over 1.4 million high school students who took AP Exams performed at a level to merit recognition as AP Scholar. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement, based on student performance on AP exams. The following are this years seniors who have earned this honor.

AP Scholar with Distinction Award (average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, and grades of 3 or higher on five or more exams). Nicholas Arnold, Vasundhara Bhargava, Amanda Ciecior, Jeffrey Corajod, Lee Farnsworth, Nathan Fisher, Rahul Gupta, Pavan Rao, Brandon Saalfrank, Jacob Schmidt, and Chase Seely.

AP Scholar with Honor Award (average grade of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and grades of 3 or higher on four or more exams) Karys Grundman, Sanjay Gunashekar, Nathan James, Dessislava Moneva, Lori Panyard, Rachel Snook, Douglas Snyder, Joseph Sterneman, and Kristina Vragovic.

AP Scholar Award (three or more AP Examinations, with grades of 3 or higher): Jeffery Adams, Emily Aeschliman, Dylan Currie, Katherine DeRosa, Rachel German, David Greco, Teri Grimes, Amy Gutwein, Ashley Hockney, Benjamin Kaplansky, Aaron Kunkle, Gregory Kyes-Myland, Anna Marquissee, Alexandra Oxyer, Erin Quinn, Cale Royer, Kathryn Ruhrold.

Area hot spots where students meet, relax, share their days

By Megan Herbert
Writer

In an attempt to escape the stress of homework and tests, students take refuge at a variety of enjoyable local venues. Movie theaters, coffee shops and churches are only a few of the many recreational places available to students in search of an enjoyable atmosphere at an affordable price.

Several popular coffee shops around town have become common hang-outs for students looking for a way to relax and enjoy a refreshing drink. Espresso Gallery offers a wide variety of cold and warm beverages to appeal to the taste buds of all types of students. Jordan Bishop (11) takes pleasure in the café's menu as well as its atmosphere and convenient location.

"[Espresso Gallery] is a good place to study," Bishop said. "I like the drinks [and it's] close by."

Kate Lessing (11) is also a coffee lover. She frequently visits The Grind and Starbucks where she can meet up with friends in public and avoid loud disturbances.

"People there aren't loud and immature," Lessing said.

"People there aren't loud and immature."

Kate Lessing
Junior

Lessing also enjoys spending time at the Mocha Lounge. Featuring local music groups, like Bride and Groom, the Mocha Lounge has become a favorite of many students who wish to enjoy a musical environment along with their favorite beverage.

Spending time at a local church youth group is another popular activity among students. Along with gaining a religious experience, students enjoy the fellowship that church activities have to offer and the chance to meet people from different schools in the local area. Rachel Lilley (11) usually spends Sunday nights at youth group at Emmanuel Community Church. Lilley takes so much pleasure in the activities and friendships she has acquired at youth group that she refers to Emmanuel as her "second home."

Attending a movie theater is another popular attraction for teenagers. Ethan Sowers (10) often goes to Rave Motion Pictures with a group of friends. Going to the movies on a Saturday night has become a classic favorite of Sowers and other students in search of a relaxing setting.

Although coffee shops and movie theaters may be generic forms of entertainment available to students year-round, there are several seasonal hot spots around town willing to meet the transforming demands of students that change as rapidly as the Indiana weather. During the warm months, Kim Kaste (11) enjoys visits to Atz Ice Cream near South Bridge Apartments. With a menu including sundaes, malts, banana splits and the most absurd flavors of ice cream, Atz caters to dessert-hungry students, keeping them cool on the hottest of days.

Other seasonal attractions include the variety of "haunted" venues located around town, challenging the courage of students by submersing them in frightful situations. Every October the Haunted Castle, Haunted Cave, Black Forest, Haunted Jail and Haunted Hotel await students who dare to enter in search of fall entertainment.

"The Haunted Castle was pretty tight," Molly Seagrave (12) said. "They had a lot of slides."

Unfortunately, this year is the last year that the Haunted Castle will be open for scares. After enduring its 28th year as a site of haunted entertainment, this former Catholic Church-turned-castle will be torn down to make room for the expansion of a local school building or parking lot. Although the fright that coincides with its graveyard location will no longer add to the terror of visitors, the Haunted Castle will be rebuilt at a new site, continuing to haunt future generations. The new venue, which will be more modern and clean, is expected to be finished by Oct. 2008 in time for the holiday rush. However, should it not be completed, Mike Thomas, the castle's volunteer marketer, promises to re-vamp the Black Forest's spook appeal in order to compensate for the community's loss.

With an array of sites for entertainment ranging from leisurely to alarming, Fort Wayne has much to offer to students of all personalities.

Alpha Mentorship offers real world experiences

By Hana Hawash
Writer

Real world projects and hands-on professional work highlight the student experience that is Alpha Mentorship. The program allows students to learn and interact on a higher level, more like the real world.

"It is a program where students are given the opportunity to study an area of interest in depth," Maggie Peters (12) said.

Alpha Mentorship is a program for juniors and seniors that takes place outside of school. Gale Bloom, who is a retired English teacher, heads the program and has been in charge of it since 2000.

Mentorship is a chance for students to do independent and advanced study in an area of interest, exposing students to a regular workday of the chosen career.

"...Three to ten students each year have been in the program. Students have experienced so many opportunities outside the classroom that few students in high schools across the country have a chance of doing," Bloom said.

This program is only for students who take AP classes. It is a difficult program to get into, and only a few can make it.

"You have to be in Advanced Placement or Honors Classes [to participate]," Andy Sterneman (12) said.

Students work with their mentor for at least 40 hours, either during 7th period or outside of school. The mentor must be a professional, as this is not an internship or job shadow. The mentor must be willing to spend a certain amount of time with the student, which makes mentors difficult to find.

"The difficult part is finding a mentor in the community to take on the position.... It requires a professional to guide and mentor a gifted student who has a passion for the chosen field," Bloom said.

The Alpha Mentorship results in a project that is graded by Bloom at the end of the program, along with a journal kept by the student over the entire course of the program. Students get to study in any career path they are interested in, so they can attain a feel for what their profession might feel like in the future. It is a deciding factor in helping figure out whether or not their chosen path is the right one.

The project is the most important part of the whole program. This project will be due at the end of the program and have something to do with the chosen career. For example, one student worked with the headmistress at Fort Wayne Ballet, and her project was to choreograph part of the spring show. Another student helped to produce a documentary on PBS. One student even worked with a team at DuPuy engineering a prosthetic elbow.

The participating students have a set of objectives that should be met during the semester, including a 40-hour working requirement, a log of activities and the final project or paper. The student also has 50-75 required hours of independent study time related to the mentorship.

Vivian Nguyen (12), Maggie Peters (12) and Rahul Gupta (12) are a few of the students taking part in the program this year. Peters, a player in the Fort Wayne Symphony, will be studying with her cello teacher. She will be looking into bluegrass music, studying its roots. Her final project is undecided, as the program has not started yet.

Gupta will be working with Dr. Stumph, a professor at IPFW. With his professors' leadership, Gupta will be studying International Economics. Nguyen is going to be working in the biomedical field at DuPuy.

Students involved in this program will look forward to a future filled with bright horizons and endless possibilities.

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Beneath the surface: On plastic casts, taking risks

Feature Column By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

I'm sitting at my desk typing out the words of this column and laughing at myself. As my fingers try to deviate from the basic home-row keys I find that there is something in the way… a cast. A big, smelly, autographed cast and I can barely reach the letter on the keyboard to type 'a w k - ward.'

A f - ter three weeks of p a i n f u l practices,' two competitions, and one MRI, the doctors finally concluded that I had broken my scaphoid, a particularly small bone in the wrist that resists healing and preliminary x-rays. I sat in the orthopedics' office waiting to be set and watched as small boys teetered on new found crutches and little girls licked lollipops while admiring bright pink casts. However, I could not share in the excitement of their naiveté; I knew that casting my arm meant the end of cheerleading, the end of tumbling, and a premature close to my senior season. I was devastated and distraught and all together overly emotional.

Much to my bittersweet embarrassment, I was premature in my despair. Despite my precarious situation and the possibility of surgery, my doctor agreed to remove my cast for our regional and state competitions, only to recast my arm in the few hours after we compete. Is this logical? Of course not; I might re-break the bone, cause it to stop healing, and force myself into surgery, but all I wanted to say was, "Thank you."

Being thankful for possible injury sound ridiculous, but in my situation I was beaming with gratitude. I thank this doctor for the chance to end my senior season competing instead of watching from the sidelines. Whereas most people would have settled with the simple and statistically correct choice of ending my season, this doctor took a risk. It's something we don't do a lot these days. We look at the black and white version of each choice and rely on rationale to decide what is best, what is logical. Most of the time this is what needs to happen, we must be down to earth as we dive into our futures, but every once in awhile doing what is "right" is not always the best answer.

Taking risks is what makes us great; it allows us to surpass the status quo. Success is not rational; all of the odds are against it. Therefore, to be more than average we must take risks that are more than average. We must so passionate about our goal that we are willing to chance the possibility of failure. Only one of five small businesses survives, yet those that do flourish. Take McDonalds; take Mac; take Google; look at Harry Potter and the story of J.K Rowling. The possibility of failure seems to be a prerequisite for success.

Risk is not always aimed at greatness. Sometimes, looking beyond the logical answer should be expected. If we were to eliminate irrational behavior and base our lives solely on proven probability we would lose town heroes, the underdog stories, and the tales of purple hearts. We would ignore the human aspect behind statistics, and that in itself is completely unacceptable.

As humans, we are more than a culmination of numbers. As Mr. Nicholson will tell you, statistics can be manipulated, but our society is hesitant to question large numbers. We take statistics as proof what is right, but we forget the affect they have on people.

It would have been perfectly rational for my doctor to say, "Sorry, you're season is over," but he didn't. In a world dominated by calculated risk, I should have been forgotten about, just another patient that was healed. However, I was lucky. I stumbled upon someone who saw me as more than a number. Wherever that may lead me, surgery or glimmering memories, I will be forever grateful that someone took a chance on me.

'Who ya gonna call' Joe Wolter

English teacher chases signs of supernatural

By Derek Luttrell
Writer

Questioning the existence of terrestrial spirits, English teacher Joe Wolter, equipped with all of the proper tools for his mission, engages in a pastime thought by most to be an adventure that yields nothing other than fantastical results. Despite the evidence that contradicts his beliefs, Wolter continues to seek paranormal beings in an effort to uncover the truth about what lies in store for the human spirit after death.

Spartana: What sites do you visit on your hunts?

Wolter: I've been to the Gettysburg battlefield, the Waverly Manors Tuberculosis Hospital in Louisville, Central State Mental Hospital in Indianapolis, the site of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago and Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, (but) most of the time I try to stay around Northern Indiana.

Spartana: What tools do you use on your hunts?

Wolter: I use a digital camera, a digital camcorder and a mini tape recorder. Since I'm an amateur hunter, I don't have a lot of the equipment that other hunters do. I usually will try to take digital pictures of anything I think would be of interest. I will also set up a mini tape recorder to try to catch an EVP.

Spartana: How do your students and family react when you tell them about your unique hobby?

Wolter: Most of my students are fascinated by my experiences and stories. I think that students like to be scared and like to think that there are unexplainable phenomena in our world. My daughters are [also] interested. They will ask if I saw anything on a recent hunt or if I captured anything on my camera. They are still too young to understand why I do it, though. [My wife] is very supportive. [She] knows that I will try to go to a place that is supposedly haunted if we travel anywhere.

Spartana: It would seem rather frightening to hunt for ghosts alone. Is there anyone in particular that you go with?

Wolter: I used to go [ghost hunting] with my wife before we had children. Now, she thinks it would be too scary for my daughters. They do know what their dad does as a hobby, though. They just don't like to go to the places. I will sometimes go with a friend or two if we can coordinate our travel plans, but usually I'm by myself.

Spartana: What unusual occurrences have you witnessed that have provoked your desire to ghost hunt?

Wolter: I had a personal experience when I was much younger. I saw something that I couldn't explain. Being naturally curious, I wanted to find out what it was. My parents excused it as a dream, but I know I was wide awake.

Spartana: What headway have you made on the ghost-catching front?

Wolter: I have caught what I think is an apparition on one of my photographs from Gettysburg [and] I've… had something grab my arm when I was walking through a basement.

Spartana: What keeps you motivated as a ghost hunter, even when there is logical evidence negating the existence of what you seek?

Wolter: It's probably the fact that most of the time you're not going to catch or see anything [that keeps you interested]..A lot of people will see something on their camera and automatically think it's paranormal. Usually the image can be explained as a natural phenomenon. [However], I like to think that there are still elements of our existence that are unexplainable. What does happen to a person when he or she dies? I'm a relatively religious person, but maybe a soul can get trapped on this plane. I don't claim to be psychic or sensitive, but I've had the hair on my arms stand up more than once.

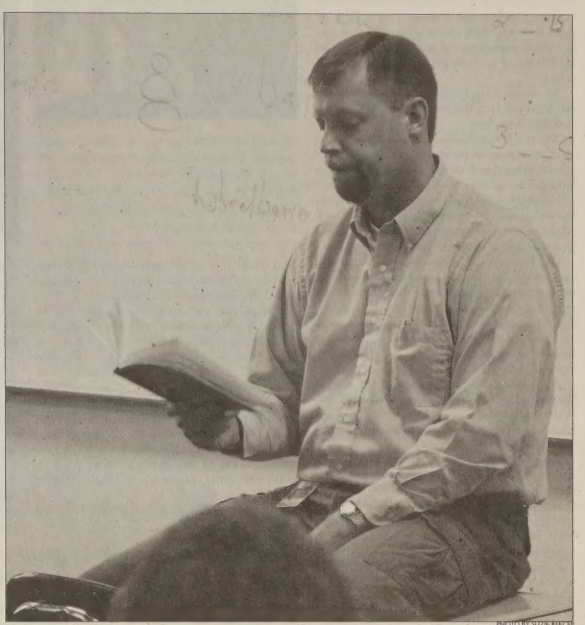
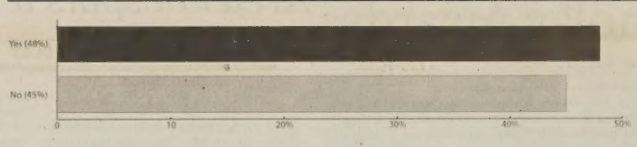


PHOTO BY SUZIE KLECZ

Do Americans believe in ghosts?

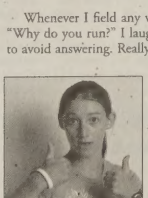


- 56% of Women admit to believing in the supernatural
- 38% of Men admit to believing in the supernatural
- 54% of people under age 45 admit to believing in the supernatural
- 41% of people 45 and older admit to believing in the supernatural
- 22% of people polled have seen or felt the presence of a ghost

This poll was conducted by CBS News Corporation among a nationwide random sample of 808 adults. Interviews were conducted by telephone from October 3-5, 2005. The error due to sampling for results, based on the entire sample, could be plus or minus four percentage points.

From the mind of the Mighty Quinn

Whenever I field any variation of the question, "Why do you run?" I laugh and use evasive tactics to avoid answering. Really, how could I admit that the reason I run is the most complicated, yet simple, thing that never came out of my mouth until now. You see, I run to live.



Feature Column By Erin Quinn
Co-Edior-in-Chief

I run to taste water, to appreciate the magical thirst quenching, eighth wonder of the world. You never know that water has a distinctive taste until you are at the halfway point of a six miler on a scorching, humid, mid August day. I run to feel every inch of my body - each burning muscle fiber, each bone from my toes to my skull as my feet pound the pavement, every raking breath I have to drag out of my body. I run to feel all kinds of pain, so that I can appreciate the minutes, hours and days without it. Sundays, the Sabbath day of rest, were designed for runners on a grueling schedule. Someone close to God must have been a racer in dire need of a recovery day.

I run to see the human spirit during its finest hour, which is early on a Saturday morning at a cross country meet, not within the story line of Shakespeare's works. Notice the brave souls who fight with every inch of their heart, mind and body to maintain a brutal pace over rough terrain, surrounded by screaming fans and elbowing competitors. Watch an underdog overtake his longtime rival in the last steps of a three mile race. Observe the agonized expressions, the weak who couldn't make it to the finish, the cowards who never tried. See the sinking realization of defeat as well as the joy of reaping the rewards from months of work and sacrifice.

I run because you can count on the running world. When everything in your life is constantly revolving, changing and spiraling out of control; you can count on this. Through the mountains of to do lists concerning college applications, the drudges of fending off my eyelids to finish essays past midnight, and the random everyday assortment of challenges (such as misplacing your class valedictorian's calculator), I take comfort in the pain, in the clarity of tradition, in the hour and a half of my day that is carefully scripted. In such turbulent times, the oh so familiar foundation is all that I need to know.

I run to hit the wall, and then find a way around it. No other sport, musical instrument or club teaches you more about yourself than running. To people who don't understand running, it is boring. To people who do understand running, it is only boring most of the time. Every once in a while, it is electrifying and addicting and magical.

I run to face real issues. You figure yourself out; you find out how much heart you have, how much you can sacrifice for the good of the whole, how far you can go past the point you never thought you could reach. You realize the gene pool benefits some more than others and that, consequently, you just have to work with what you have got. You come face to face with the devil sitting on your shoulder, telling you to give up, and you learn how to ignore him. You learn how do whatever it takes to keep yourself moving. You learn the value of a minute, and that you're going to have to sweat and hurt in order to get anywhere. You learn to breathe air when you can because you don't know when you will get it next. You learn the beauty of a friend who can see you at your worst and love you anyway, you appreciate the rare days with perfect weather and you discover that you are stronger than you think.

What more could you ask for?

I run to love. I run because I was promised a team of my own, and true to the tradition, I got one. The eclectic group is not what I had envisioned, but it suits perfectly. I will always protect and admire this team. My team.

So here's to you, Meghan "Mega Miles", Ali "Auto Pilot", Chloe "Contra-Competitive", Carolyn "Cruise Control", Katrina "Klueless", Rachel "Regulator", Laura "Little Turtle", Stephanie "Slacker", Kathryn "Krunch", Kayla "Kentucky Bass" and the rest of the gang. You are the unsung heroes of an under-appreciated sport. Our school doesn't really appreciate you, but you don't need the halfhearted support of 2,000 souls when you have Coach Wyss' voice wafting around an entire three mile course.

If you are at all moved to action, ask me how to get to the Plex tomorrow afternoon to watch the semi-state meet. Come see seven of my heroes do what they do best–stare an impossibly daunting task in the face, step onto the line and race.

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above beyond

In current society, teenagers are often looked upon as the problem demographic. From issues such as binge drinking, underage sexual activity and illegal drug use, the stereotype of teens is that they are quintessentially "bad." The media portrays this popular image and the cliché continues.

However, the American public tends to overlook the positive aspects of the youth. Nationwide, teenage birthrates are declining, as are dropout rates and arrests. College enrollment is increasing along with the number of students who receive high school degrees. Yet the stereotype continues.

Here at Homestead, the faculty has a different opinion of the rising generation.

Doug Waldman, a veteran science teacher at Homestead, has not only seen countless generations pass through his classrooms, he has also gotten involved in their lives outside of school. Each year, he leads anywhere from one to three wildlife trips for students during his own breaks from school. His experience with teenagers has allowed him to see both the positive and negative sides of the age group.

"There are a lot of young people out there that are very hard workers, dependable and courteous. I think it's more that a few bad apples mark all of them," Waldman said.

This seems to be common among those who have day-to-day interaction with adolescents.

Gregory Fryzel, a French teacher at Homestead, has taught high school students for 28 years, and also agrees with Waldman's thinking.

"People see teenagers…as irresponsible, lazy, reckless and immature," Fryzel said. "The problem is…there are some teenagers who are irresponsible, there are some teenagers who are lazy, and that forms the stereotype for the group, and that is unfair."

Despite these perceptions, high school student nation wide are proving themselves as more than a negative statistic.

Students at this school participate in after school sports, clubs and jobs. They balance the rigorous course load of one of Newsweeks 1,300 best high school's in the nation and They constitute a fraction of the 55% of teens who are involved in community service (the highest percentage ever recorded) and they work toward bettering their community while bettering themselves.

If our society could look beyond the negative illusions of teens they would find accomplished individuals, young adults who are fighting the rather prejudiced connotations that come with the years 13-19. Beyond the surface, one can find students being…

the musician

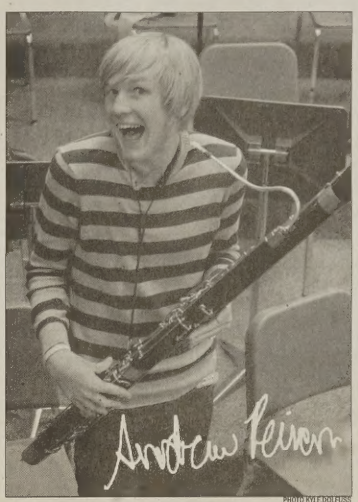


PHOTO KYLE DOLFUSS

Andrew Reiman

Eagle Scout, 4 year bassoonist in the Ft. Wayne Youth Symphony, guest musician in the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, principal bassoon in Homestead's orchestra, and staff member at Camp Dagget (totalling 5,000 hrs of community service).

I have delivered two sermon's at Aldersgate United Methodist Church and played in over 300 concerts

My *motto* is "Students should not fear their administration. Administration should fear their students."

I am *inspired* by Eugene V. Debs, the socialist leader in the early 1990's

I am most *proud* of being an Eagle Scout

the performer

Kari Diehl

Ballroom dancer, actress, member of Youth Chorale, elite Show Choir and Leading Worship at Trinity Evangelical Church.

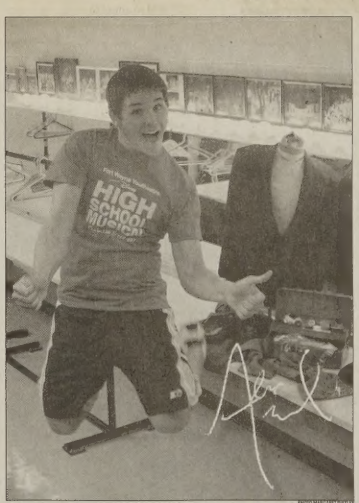
I have acted in "When in Rome" and "Big" at the Civic Theater, taken piano lessons and placed as top soprano at the all-state choir competition.

My *motto* is "Singing is the eyes and windows to the soul."

I am *inspired* by Mrs. Dorothy Kittaka, she is an opera singer, music teacher and renowned conductor

I am most *proud* of my performance of the play "When in Rome."

the dancer



Alex Tordi

Troy Bolton in Youth Theater's "High School Musical," Actor and Singer and three year member of Youth Leadership Ft. Wayne.

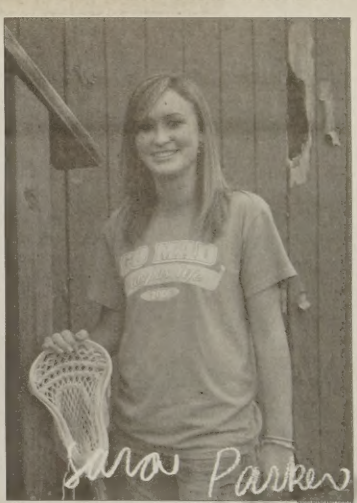
I have been one of five leading roles in Arena Dinner Theater's "Tintypes," acted in numerous plays at Homestead and been in Show Chior for four years.

My *motto* is "Never set your goal as high as your ambition; it only sets you up for a bigger upset."

I am *inspired* by my theater directors; they are the best people to work with and are nothing but supportive.

I am most *proud* of my role in "High School Musical" as Troy Bolton.

the athlete



Sara Parker

Tennis player, cross country runner, lacrosse member, FCA leader, member of The Chapel youth group and leader of Campus Life.

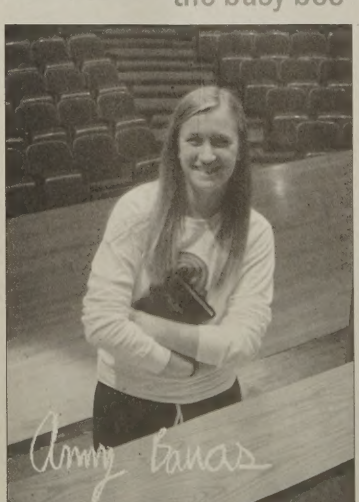
I have been on mission trips to Los Angeles and Belize, volunteered in Pediatrics and Surgery at Lutheran Hospital and participated in weekly bible studies.

w *motto* is "What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us."

I am *inspired* by my mom. Though she passed away my 8th grade year, she continues to influence the way I live, my values and my actions.

I am most *proud* of my church involvment.

the busy bee



Amy Banas

Devoted Christian, diver, golfer, hip-hop dancer, Class Royale Show Chior member, twin sister and honors student.

I have been on a mission trip to Tennessee, turned my face against drugs and alcohol, been involved in bible study, youth group and service projects and make it my goal to go out of my way for others.

My *motto* is "Live, laugh, love."

I am *inspired* by my parents. They are role models for me academically, spiritually, and morally. And of course my twin sister.

I am most *proud* of my involvement in Young Life and Campus Life.

the thinker

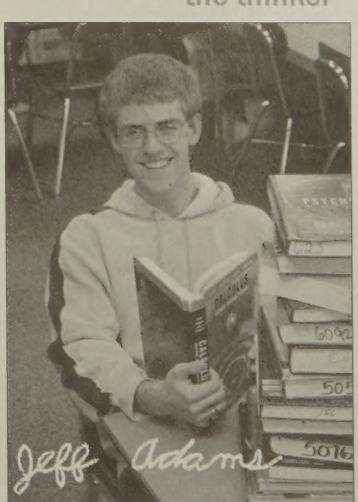


PHOTO KYLE DOLFUSS

Jeff Adams

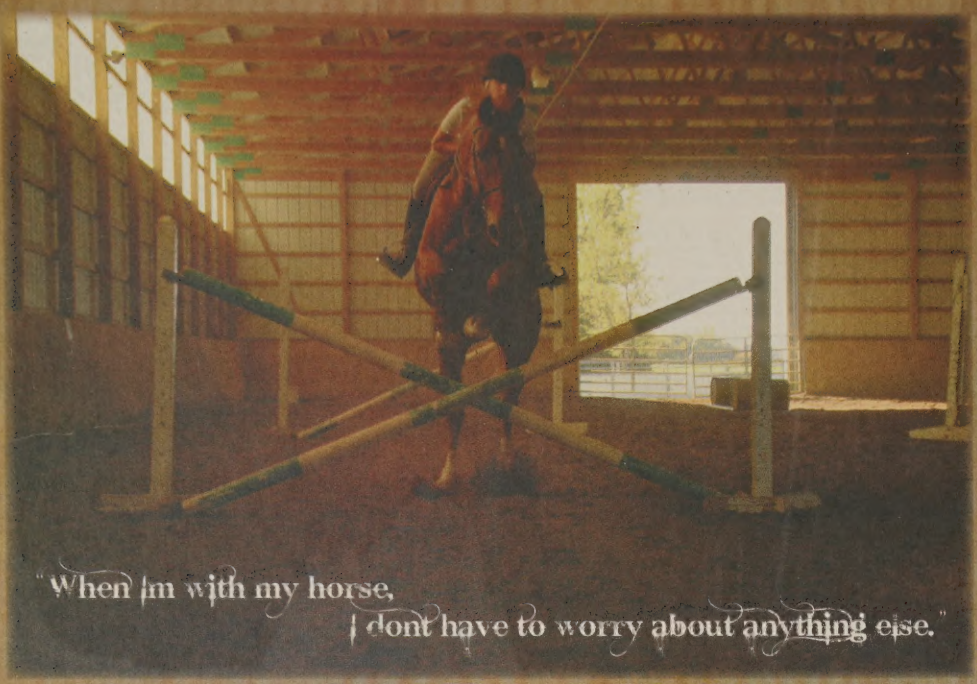
8th ranked in the senior class, AP scholar, member of SADD, member of National Honors Society and Key Club Board Member for two years.

I have spent over 175 hours volunteering and doing community service, taken four AP tests and plan to take four more tests in the near future.

My *motto* is "Conformity is often unnecessary; in general, just be yourself."

I am *inspired* by my friends and their ability to explore many options and do well in all of them.

I am most *proud* of finding the time to do it all.



"When Im with my horse, I dont have to worry about anything else."

Maddie Shine's dedication to riding proves to be anything but

HORSING AROUND

Photos by Suzie Reeves

By Taylor Harrell
Life Editor

Clean the frog, tighten the girth and be sure the bit fits comfortably. Sound like a few random words all strung together? Most would answer yes, unless you are Maddie Shine (11) of course. Having been an avid horseback rider, and competitor for over ten years, Shine is one of few at this school who measures in hands and is accustomed to falling from five feet in the air almost regularly.

Shine became involved in the sport of horseback riding at a young age.

"I was first in gymnastics," Shine said. "Then one summer my mom sent my brother and I to a horse camp, and I absolutely loved it."

As the years went on, Shine began to get more involved in the sport, which eventually lead to the purchasing of number of horses. Along with that came the necessity of horse feed, proper housing and all the equipment needed to compete and ride.

"It gets pretty expensive," Shine said. "But it's just something that you have to do."

Though the costs exceed most sports, it is the cross country traveling that prevails as the biggest sacrifice. Most of Shine's shows are held out of state. Not only must she miss school, and an entire weekend at home, she must also endure the long hours on the road while driving a horse trailer.

"Last summer I went to New York, which was sixteen hours both ways," Shine said. "It was horrible."

The majority of her competitions are held within four to five hours of driving and occur just about every weekend.

"I used to compete a lot more," said Shine. "I would miss so much school, but ever since I started high school, I've had to cut back a little."

With the love of riding comes the long hours of hard work and dedication needed to prepare. Shine, who has also been a football manager for the past three years, spends about two or more hours a day, five days a week grooming and practicing her horses.

"I typically spend one hour riding, and then another hour cleaning," Shine said.

She usually rides alone, but also attends two lessons every week with her personal trainer.

"I switched barns a while ago," Shine said. "Ever since then I've been with a trainer less than what it used to be."

With all the hard work and commitment also come the benefits. Though she is gone for extended periods of time, Shine has a great number of friends within her riding circuit.

"It is a whole different world out there," Shine said. "I really enjoy getting to see my friends when I travel, just because it's not that often."

Not only does she have the exposure to hundreds of different people, Shine also gets to enjoy the unique joy, and pride of being a successful rider.

"[Riding] is the biggest stress reliever in the world," Shine said. "When I'm with my horse, I don't have to worry about anything else, besides falling off of course."

Preparing for upcoming competitions, Maddie Shine spends time with her horse, Cedric.

meet cedric

Show Name:
The Entertainer

Barn Name:
Cedric

Age:
10 years

Height (Hands):
17.1 hands

Food Consumption:
1-2 scoops of grain and 4 flakes of hay in the both the morning and night

Time Spent Grooming:
25 minutes daily

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homestead high school
4310 homestead road
fort wayne, indiana 46814

the Spartana

Friday, November 9, 2007

Opinion PG5

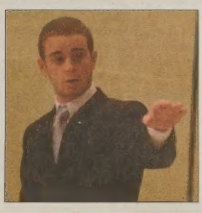
life PG4

Sports PG6

Audience members help determine the fate in this year's fall play recalling

the night of *january* 16

PHOTO BY SUZIE KEECER



Above: Flor Ortega (10) portraying Karen Andre, the defendent in the play, enters the court scene wearing handcuffs.
Top Right: As Defense Attorney Stevens, Greg Kyes-Myland (12) makes his point during the trial.
Bottom Right: Arguing Andre's guilt, Katie O'Keefe portrays District Attorney Flint.

By Ashley Heath
Writer

Scandalous affairs, treacherous betrayals and murder plague the plot of this year's fall play, The Night of January 16th, which is set to premiere on Nov 8.

Tickets are six dollars and can be purchased at the door on the night of the performance or during lunch.

The play stars Katie O'Keefe (12) as District Attorney Flint, Greg Kyes (12) as District Attorney Stephens and Flor Ortega (10) as the defendant, Karen Andre. Jen Fisher, drama instructor and play director, has high hopes for the cast.

"Their greatest strength is their natural talent and ability to pick things up [quickly]," Fisher said.

Although that is not to say that the troupe has not been without their obstacles. Fisher comments on the scheduling issues that accompany directing a large cast.

"The problem is we have a lot of talented, busy, involved students," Fisher said.

The actors attend practices after school which last anywhere from one to upwards of two and a half hours according to the role and importance of their character. Actors also do a good amount of preparation on Saturdays.

In addition to reworking their schedules, the cast takes on the inherent difficulties of acting. The actors must struggle with memorizing lines, staying in character and keeping their calm during performances, but nerves seem to be one thing they can handle.

"Usually I kind of panic before, but once I am on stage and actually saying my lines, then the nerves just go away and it becomes fun," Candice Bertl (12) said.

The faceless figures backstage do not have to deal with stage fright but

SEE FALL PLAY on page 2A

BRIEFS

FALL ATHLETIC AWARDS

The Fall Athletic Awards will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 13 in the school auditorium from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. As the fall sports come to an end, students that have participated in any fall sport will receive recognition for their performance.

NHS INDUCTION

The National Honor Society Induction Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 14 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Qualified juniors who have a 10.0 GPA or higher and receive teacher acknowledgement will be integrated into the society. Returning seniors will be recognized as well. Seniors are asked to send in pictures for the slide show. Along with this, the traditional candle lighting ceremony will be conducted. There are about 80 seniors and 70 juniors participating this year.

SPEECH TEAM

The Speech Team meets Tuesdays in the afternoon, while debate team meets Thursdays in the afternoon. Individual members from both teams meet on various days.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR OFFICER PAPE

Anthony J. Pape, Allen County Police Officer, was selected by the American Police Canine Association as School Resource Officer of the 2007 school year. Officer Pape launced a national certification standard for School Resource Officer Canine Detection teams. The American Police Canine Association chose the national certification standard in April. Officer Pape, along with his police dog partner, Hunter, are the first to receive national certification in the field as a School Resource Officer team.

Administration looks to resolve fall attendance issues

Upperclassmen skipping standardized test days frustrate faculty, counselors

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

Although juniors and seniors who have passed ISTEP are encouraged to take advantage of the week to plan for job shadows and college visits, there still remains a large portion of upperclassmen that skip school to just skip school. To counteract this problem, both the counseling department and the administration are working t

ogether to plan out next year's testing.

"The majority [of absent seniors and juniors] have been excused by parents," Anita Gross, Southwest Allen County Schools social worker, said.

Gross' statement parallels the events that have been unfolding ever since standardized tests negated teachers' efforts to advance the curriculum during the week of testing.

Many seniors convinced their parents into calling the attendance office and saying that their child was 'sick' during ISTEP week.

"[Attendance] does affect where the school ranks in [terms of] the No Child Left Behind Act," Gross said.

Passed in the spring of 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act is a federal law that increased school accountability for their students' academic careers, careers that could be potentially hindered by seniors deciding to play 'hooky' on standardized test days. In addition to such a national aspect, low attendance could act as a deterrent "as Homestead competes for prestigious awards," counselor Diane Rice said.

Preliminary data shows that Homestead held an attendance rate of 95.7% last year, while the state average was 95.8%, a four-year low.

SEE ATTENDANCE on page 2A

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Band places fourth for last show in Dome

PHOTO BY KARA HACKETT

By Hana Svetlovics
Writer

A fourth place finish at the State Marching Band Finals has left seniors of the Spartan Alliance Marching Band with mixed feelings.

Placing ahead of the Spartans on Oct. 20 were the Avon Marching Black and Gold in first, the Carmel Marching Greyhounds in second, followed by the Ben Davis Marching Giants in third.

Avon has placed first for seven consecutive years, causing bitter feelings and rivalry with the Spartans.

"Avon has been our rival for a while now," drum line member, Sarah Antrobus (12) said. "They have a very competitive program to be in band, whereas Homestead lets anyone

SEE STATE on page 2A

ISTEP moved to spring, GQE cancelled for sophomores

By Celia Grundman
Writer

ISTEP testing is moving back to the spring semester, a change that some believe is long overdue. Indiana is also eliminating the Graduating Qualifying Exam (GQE) for sophomores and replacing it with end of year exams in Algebra, Biology and English.

Governor Mitch Daniels announced the change, which had been a campaign pledge of his, on Oct. 5.

"It makes sense at the tenth grade level for end of year exams," Tom Quigley said, who helps to administer the ISTEP exam.

While the GQE measured only what students learned in grades eight and nine, the end of year exams will measure what students have learned in the tenth grade also.

"I personally like spring testing better because there's not usually a whole lot of time for review with fall testing," Vicky Troyer said, who teaches math and language arts ISTEP remediation.

The class of 2011 will have to take both the fall ISTEP and the new ISTEP in spring next year in order for the transition to take place.

"It's annoying that we have to take two tests next year," Emily Boine (9) said, who disagrees with spring testing.

"It [pushes] back [the] curriculum and creates stress to get everything done faster in time for the test," Boine said.

The writing portion of the test will be taken in March and the other parts in late April and early May, so

SEE TESTING on page 2A

Rest area serves as reminder

Student government, Aboite New Trails cooperate to finish project

By Katherine DeRosa
News Editor

The benefits of the Aboite Trails Plan range from safety to economic development. A commemorative 'rest area' will soon be an additional benefit. Proposed by Max Isroff (9), the rest area is intended to be a place to memorialize all Southwest Allen County School (SACS) students who have passed away.

Isroff first thought of the idea after the tragic death of Zena Mourtada.

"When Zena died, I had the vision of a bench at Homestead with her name on it as a memorial," Isroff said. "As I looked into the opportunity more closely, I learned about the rest areas for the Aboite New Trails."

Isroff suggested that one of these rest areas be memorialized for not only Zena, but also any students in the district who have died.

The rest area will be located at the intersection of Aboite Center Road and Homestead Road in front of Summit Middle School so that it can be fully utilized by the students. Circular in shape, the rest area will contain benches and trees around its perimeter. In the center of the circle, bricks will be laid that contain the names of all SACS students who have died. The rest area will connect a sidewalk that has yet to be paved.

Isroff made this plan possible.

"I made contact with Lori Keys who is the executive director of Aboite New Trails. We then went on to meet with Jim Coplan who is

SEE REST AREA on page 2A

STATE Cont. from page 1A

join."

This rivalry is motivation for the band, but the loss to Avon does not change band members' attitude of their performance.

"Sure there was some disappointment [in losing], but we had an amazing show, and that's what we went there to do," Logan Haffner (12) said.

Because weekend competitions are usually out of town, band members are used to getting up early on Saturdays. The day of state finals was no exception.

"Most sections host a breakfast before a contest, and I hosted a breakfast at six in the morning," Brad Starks (12), tuba player, said. "[Because of that,] most people get up at five in the morning."

Breakfast was followed by a pep talk at 7:20 a.m. at the school, with practice immediately after from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

After practicing, the band proceeded to travel 120 miles to downtown Indianapolis. The Spartans performed second at the competition. For senior band members, this was their last performance for the Spartan Alliance Band.

"[Knowing this was my last performance was] amazing," Haffner said. "Not because it's all over now, but to know that if I was to choose any performance from all four of my years to be my last, I wouldn't even think twice about picking this one." Members of band all shared the same opinion on this year's final performance.

"We had an excellent performance," Kristen Reiske (12), trumpet player, said. "The entire band felt it was the best performance of the year."

While there were feelings of pride for the performance, feelings of disappointment still remained.

"I feel like we were gypped a little, because I put in all that hard work for four years and it didn't turn out how I wanted it," Starks said.

Disappointment this year has led the band to be hopeful and determined for next year.

"Placing as high as we do against [Avon] is a great accomplishment, and every winning streak has to end sometime," Antrobus said.

While scores are the focus in competition, numbers are not the only thing that make the final event so memorable.

"In the third piece of our show, there was this huge hole that's supposed to be the pinnacle of our show," Starks said. "I remember at the end of it, I looked at Danielle Fry (12) and there was a huge smile on her face."

While the event itself is memorable, the atmosphere of the RCA Dome can also be mesmerizing.

"Marching on the same turf that the Colts play on [and] looking up to see 30,000 fans was an incredible experience that can only be achieved by actually doing it," Antrobus said.

While practices are strenuous and time consuming, they can be enjoyable. Without band after school, members are unsure as to what to do with their free time.

"I'll even miss our practices," Haffner said. "I'll probably end up sitting around at home not knowing what to do with all my new free time."

The bittersweet ending to the band's season has left seniors reminiscent of their final year.

"My senior year [has been] my favorite in band," Reiske said. "It's great being able to teach and lead and to know my voice is actually heard."

With marching season over, the band still meets in their seventh period class. Instead of performing at football games, members will play in the pep band at basketball games. They will also have a performance at the Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA) in March.

"Band teaches you responsibility and hard work, and it gives you something to do," Reiske said. "It's always worth it in the end."

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Morgan Busch (11) performs in preparation for the state finals band competition.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

REST AREA Cont. from page 1A

the business director for SACS and is also on the Aboite New Trails Board. This led to that and now the project is under way," Isroff said.

This rest area, however, does not come without costs. There is a $25,000 expenditure to create the rest area and pave the connecting sidewalks. Although this sounds like a steep price for SACS to pay, the schools have donated upwards of $20,000 in the past to the Aboite New Trails Project. This year's $20,000 donation will specifically be given to the rest area construction costs. The donation will cover the cost of upkeep, landscaping and other miscellaneous items.

Homestead's Student Government will donate the additional $5,000 needed to complete the project. Student Government is in the process of creating fundraisers for the project. Possible fundraisers include a student golf tournament and a walk-a-thon. More information will be given later this month on the morning announcements. Right now there is no established way students can donate money, but if all goes to schedule there will be a jar in each classroom in a few weeks to collect donations. Isroff emphasizes the fact that the money could be raised easily if each student donates just $2.50.

"If any student wishes to get more involved we are always willing to hear new ideas about the rest area," Isroff said.

The committee feels very strongly that the project be completed before the end of the school year. Keys stresses that the rest area is a student project, so students are in charge of planning. The addition of the rest area will add a sentimental value to the already beneficial Aboite Trails.

ATTENDANCE Cont. from page 1A

Rice recognizes the problem, citing the rapidly changing nature of standardized tests, such as the ISTEP and the PSAT, has created strategic obstacles. The attendance issues date back to when the state's educational assessment was only administered to sophomores, and teachers were told to halt their instruction. As freshmen became required to participate in ISTEP, the conflict broadened.

"Next fall, the test will be the same as this fall," Rice said. "Planning has already begun on an intense level."

According to Rice, a tentative schedule for next year calls for every class to meet for 62 to 65 minutes over the course of the three testing days. During these periods, teachers will be asked to make progress in their instruction. The administration also hopes to receive cooperation from extracurricular staff members, such as athletic coaches and band directors.

TESTING Cont. from page 1A

the test will be taken with a third of the school year still left.

However, this is crucial to the change in timing. The test results are meant to come back before the end of the school year.

"They're hoping tests will be back before summer school," Quigley said, "and the returning of the exams is very, very important."

Quigley has also stated worries about remediation funds. Governor Daniels has made a deal with the exam vendors, CTB-McGraw Hill and Questar Assessment Inc. that lowers the ISTEP's usual cost of $31 million to $29.5 million for the next two years. Because Homestead will be administering both exams next year, they will consequently have to pay for both tests. Furthermore, there is the possibility of smaller diagnostic tests being incorporated in the new ISTEP plan, a goal that Superintendant of Public Instruction, Suellen Reed, is trying to accomplish.

"The worry to me is that they'll tap into remediation funds," Quigley said. "The [remediation funds are] not getting anywhere near enough, in my opinion."

Though Quigley agrees with the change to end of year exams, he still worries about remediation.

"It's one thing to test people and another to provide funding to fix them if they need remediation," Quigley said.

The new ISTEP tests will include social studies tests for grades four, six and eight and all students in grades three through eight will continue to be tested in English, writing and math.

Reed said testing in the spring would provide for any needed remediation efforts over the summer and subsequent school year.

"Let's give it a try, but let's fund it properly," Quigley said.

FALL PLAY Cont. from page 1A

are kept busy with costumes, construction projects and scene changes before, during and after the play.

"The people backstage do so much and they don't get the recognition they deserve because they aren't on stage," Fisher said.

Nevertheless, the crew seems to draw a certain self-satisfaction from being the unsung heroes of the play.

"I have a lot of fun," stage manger Katie Ritter (11) said. "I just want to be around it." Their hard work and dedication are destined to pay off in creating this unique theatrical experience.

"It's an interactive courtroom drama," Fisher said, "[and] I think [the verdict] will say a lot about our community."

In the play, the defendant's fate will be in the hands of the jury. A mix of 10 student extras, who also auditioned for the play, and teachers invited by the cast and crew will form the jury. The jury will change with each performance and consequently, each night the ending of the play will be determined by the verdict that the jury foreman reads.

"[The split ending] will actually be better for the cast because they will have people to react to," Fisher said.

The cast notes that the courtroom setting of this year's drama establishes a much more serious tone than previous years' comedies such as Arsenic and Old Lace and Crazy for You.

"Playing a defense attorney, I get to bring that aspect of being that sly, smooth guy as well as being a strong dominant personality on stage in a more serious role," Kyes said.

Fisher hopes that the serious tone will provoke some serious thought.

"I hope that [the audience] walks away from this play questioning whether that was the right verdict or not [and] that they get a feel for the importance of making decisions," Fisher said.

The Night of January 16th, written by Ayn Rand, was published in 1934 and was the Broadway hit of the mid-1930's. Fisher reveals that the play was written in this unique interactive format so that Rand could gauge the community's beliefs and observe society.

Rand has also written other fictional works such as Anthem, The Fountainhead and Atlas Shrugged.

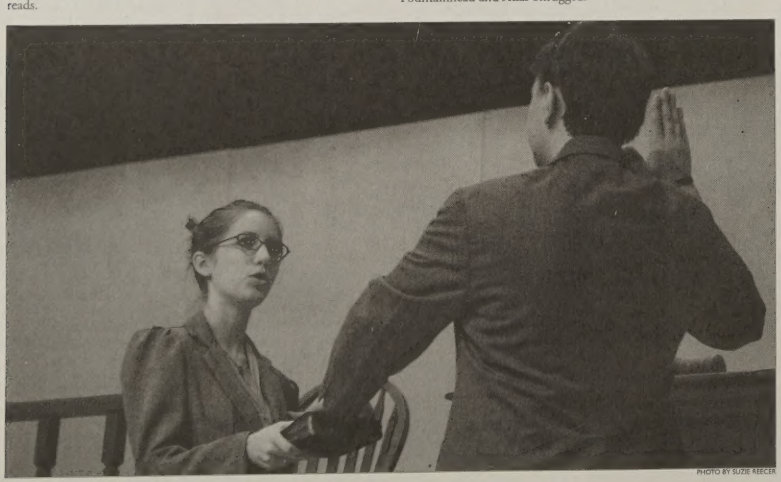

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Lori Panyard (12) holds the Bible as Nick Jewson (11) swears to tell the truth in the fall play, which takes the audience through a muder trial.

'DIRECTOR'S CUT'

Fisher says she liked to be the star of the show in high school, but when she entered college, she became fonder of the technical aspects of theater. "I'm a techie at heart," she says. Here's what she has to say:

...on acting:

"It's a great creative outlet...Acting can benefit you in all areas of life. Presence, confidence, public speaking...Students learn that they can mistakes"

...on choosing The Night of January 16th:

"I wanted to do something that would bring students in, was different and would involve a lot of students"

...on her favorite part:

"The end of Act II. It's not the most important, but it turns the case around and kind of sends the audience for a loop."

...on the toughest part:

"For me...it is all of the little things that pop up and... getting everything to flow together."

...on directing:

"It always comes together in the end, it just seems like it never will, but it always does."

SHOW TIMES & TICKET PRICES

Friday, Nov. 9th
8:00-10:30pm

Saturday, Nov. 10th
8:00-10:30pm

Tickets cost $6

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS ABOUT THE PLAY

- Over 70 students auditioned for the play and only 20 parts were cast. 10 student extras for the jury and 10 crew members round out the group.
- The group went to the police department to get real evidence bags to use as props in the play.
- Teachers are invited to be members of the jury by means of a jury summons.
- The cast loves to give back rubs to each other.
- On the crew, Fisher says there are two girls who are better with drills than the boys.

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Opinion

Have an opinion? Fill this out. Rip it out. Turn it in. Room 620.

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Friday, November 9, 2007

School allows contraceptives

By Lee Farnsworth
Writer

Portland, Maine is home to King Middle School, the site of a national debate involving middle school students and birth control. The members of the school board in Portland voted 7-2 to allow the school's clinic to give students access to birth control pills after undergoing counseling and being examined by a nurse practitioner. The students do not have to notify parents about receiving the birth control pills, but parents must sign a waiver that allows students access to the health clinic.

The program is based out of the middle school's health clinic, which has been offering condoms and pregnancy testing for several years, as well as other routine medical testing. While the stated purpose of the program is to protect the small percentage of middle school students who choose to be sexually active, many have voiced concerns that the program is not all positive.

National programs providing contraceptives through high school clinics are more common than one might think, with about a quarter of the nation's schools currently having some type of program. Of schools with this type of health clinic in place, a large percentage currently offers oral contraceptives to high school students. The numbers are naturally significantly lower for middle schools, but King is not the first of its kind.

Still, some parents are concerned that the program sends the wrong message. Providing contraceptives is tantamount to endorsing sexual activity in middle school students, or at least condoning the behavior, in critics' minds.

Also, students usually have access to contraceptives through public health agencies. If the contraceptives are really needed, these agencies provide an outlet without the involvement of a school. There is a cost associated with this plan, which differs slightly from the middle school's involvement. At King Middle School, students are usually able to obtain the contraceptives free of charge with the school using state Medicaid programs to help with the costs.

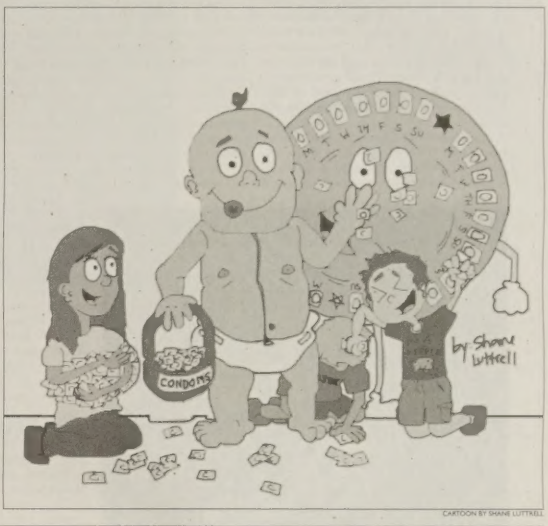
The more conservative members of Portland have harshly criticized the program. Nick McGee, the city's Republican Party chairman, said of the policy, "[i]t is an attack on the moral fabric of our community, and a black eye for our state."

For those who oppose the program, the main issue is not with students having access to birth control. Many critics realize that some middle school students do choose to be sexually active and that those students should be protected. However, the idea that the school provides the protection is seen as improper. Arguments over the fact that parents are not notified if their child receives birth control have also caused controversy.

Proponents would argue that the important issue is to protect the students, regardless of the source of that protection. If students are sexually active, then the school owes it to those students to have a program in place through which they can get contraceptives to protect themselves. Furthermore, studies conducted based on the implementation of birth control policies in other school districts have shown that access to birth control does not increase sexual activity among students, one of the concerns for the skeptics of the program.

Parents do have some control over their child's ability to obtain the contraceptives, as a waiver is required by state law in order for the student to use school health services. However, if parents are unwilling to allow their children access to birth control, then the children are, as of now, unable to access any of the health services that the school offers. This issue troubles school board members and parents alike, and the school board is working toward a proposal that would allow parents to enroll their children in all aspects of the clinic except reproductive services.

According to the plan's supporters, the decision was made in the best interest of students. The program only affects a small fraction of middle school students based on a survey in which only five of the school's roughly 500 students identified themselves as sexually active, but proponents say that it is paramount that those students receive the protection they need when choosing to be sexually active. King Middle School's health clinic has also been providing their few sexually active students with condoms since 2002. No one is applauding the decision of students to become sexually active, but that doesn't mean that those students don't deserve access to critically important contraceptives.



CARTOON BY SHANE LUTTRELL

Ed Board debates school's 'grey' tolerance policy

After the school's most recent crackdown on substance abuse at our school, the Editorial Board has looked into the school's policy regarding an awfully potent topic: minor consumption.

With the implementation of random drug testing in the 2005-06 school year, Homestead abandoned any possibility of adopting a 'zero tolerance policy.' The testing program calls for first time offenders to be subject to up to a 40-day suspension from all extracurricular activities. However, those who fail to produce a 'clean' urine sample can reduce their suspension to only ten days if the offender volunteers to attend a six-week substance abuse class led by district social worker, Anita Gross.

This policy is more of a slap on the wrist than anything. The district has even chosen to deal with the issue themselves, rather than passing it off to the legal system.

Second time offenders face a much more serious punishment. However, the Editorial Board believes that if someone fails two drug tests, they knowingly and willingly did so and the punishment is just. Those who fail twice put their Southwest Allen County education on the line and face the possibility of expulsion straight in the eye. This fateful judgment is left up to the administration, and rightfully so.

Two failed drug tests for prescribed Ritalin deserves a much different punishment from testing positive for marijuana twice after being caught selling drugs on school property. A 'zero tolerance policy' would force the school to abandon all reasonable circumstance and give each student the exact same punishment even though the two committed two very different crimes. One was obeying doctor's orders, while the other was expanding our district's drug problem. The Editorial Board agrees that these two crimes require very different and separate punishments, which is exactly what the Student Handbook leaves up to the administration.

Much of the same judgment is delegated to the administration concerning minor consumption and possession through the Student Handbook. For the first offense of minor consumption or possession, option one is five days OSS, the filing of a police report and a recommendation for expulsion. The second option is five days OSS, the filing of a police report and an alternative program for expelled students for drug and alcohol violations.

The Editorial Board once again agrees that two options could very well be necessary for a student being legally intoxicated during their math class and a student who happened to leave a water bottle of vodka in the backseat of their car after the previous weekend.

Whereas the punishment for a second failed drug test is dramatically more severe than the first, the punishment for a second minor intoxication or possession offense is incredibly similar to the first offense's punishment. Students now face ten days of OSS, a police report, an expulsion recommendation and suspension from all school activities for up to one calendar year from the day of the offense.

The absence of a 'zero tolerance policy' in our school graciously allows for students to act up and make a mistake once. Five days OSS for being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is a strong message, but not the end of the world. A 'zero tolerance policy' would force a first-time offender to be subject to the same punishment that a six-time offender would suffer.

While the current policy leaves many decisions up to the administration regarding punishments and their severity, the Editorial Board agrees that the administration should be given this power. Homestead's 'grey tolerance policy,' is the perfect blend between the black rules defined in the Student Handbook and the white decisions left up to our administration.

Homestead began to shift away from adopting a controversial 'zero tolerance policy' after the creation of random drug testing. The school has continued to steer away from specific rules because it is so difficult to predict every single way that students will ever choose to cause trouble. The only reasonable solution is exactly what the Student Handbook outlines: options. These options provide a structure for the administration to work off of, yet also make that structure flexible enough so that no one ever serves an unusual or unfitting punishment for their crime.

Not to mention, everyone, including the Editorial Board, hates to hear 'it says so in the Student Handbook.'

OFFENSES	RANGE OF POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES		OPTIONS
Use, Possession, Consumption of, and/or Alcohol and/or Drugs and/or Drug Paraphernalia	FIRST OFFENSE Option 1: - 5 day OSS and - police report filed and - Expulsion Recommendation Option 2: - 5 day OSS and - Police report filed and - Alternative Program for Expelled Students for Drug and Alcohol Violations	SECOND OFFENSE 10 day OSS, police report filed and Expulsion Recommendation and suspension from all school activities for up to 1 calendar year from date of offense (Extracurricular/Co-curricular participants)	Legal Prosecution

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homestead high school
4310 homestead road
fort wayne, indiana 46814

Life

The Evolution of a Student
Seniors taking responsibility, not just slacking.
See story on page 5A.

Friday, November 9, 2007

Blind, deaf now able to enjoy movies

Program for disabled increases ticket prices at Rave

By Haley Zimmerman
Copy Editor

Most moviegoers take the simple experience of walking into a theater, sitting down and enjoying a film for granted. Until recently, members of the community who have visual or hearing impairments have been unable to divulge in such a basic form of entertainment as going to a theater. However, with a new program at Rave Motion Pictures, the Motion Picture Access project (MoPix), that will change.

"[MoPix] is a system to aid blind and deaf moviegoers," Tyler Marshall (11), Rave employee, said. "For blind people it has a narration system to describe what's happening and for deaf people there's a device with captions on it so they hold on to so they can read instead of hear what's being said."

MoPix will allow people previously unable to fully take pleasure in going to a movie to at least grasp a little bit of the experience.

"We're doing this for the public to offer it to people with disabilities so everybody can enjoy movies," Joe Dreyer, manager at Rave, said.

While the program is in the early stages at Rave, MoPix was created in 1992 as a research project and continues to branch out across the nation. Fort Wayne will be one of three locations to support this program in Indiana.

"We're still in the working stages right now, but we're hoping to have it up and running by Christmas," Dreyer said.

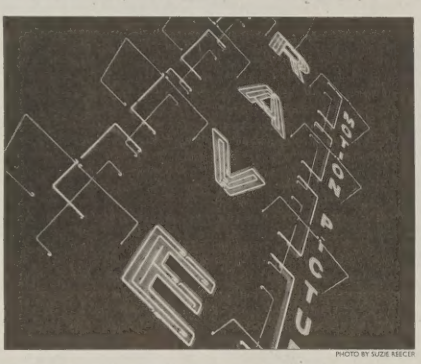
PHOTO BY SUZIE KEECH
Rave movie theaters are one of a few exclusive theaters with the MoPix aid.

One bad thing about this program is that ticket prices have been raised, once more, to meet financial needs. While evening tickets were raised to $7.75 over the summer, they are now $8.50. The increase in the cost of movie tickets has some students upset.

"I think [raising prices] might hurt their business; the increase in movie prices is a detriment," Alex Oxyer (12) said. "Kids who were struggling to buy a $7.75 ticket are going to get hurt. It's also going to be hard for dates, because then the guy is going to have a $20.00 movie ticket."

While $0.75 might not seem like a huge increase in prices, for working students every cent makes a difference.

"Ticket prices are $2.00 more than I make an hour working," Oxyer said. "With the minimum wage increase it's still $2.00 more than most kids make in an hour. The prices should be closer to minimum wage."

For those students who get their spending money from their parents, paying a little extra money might not be a huge deal, but for some people tickets are just too expensive.

"High school students have other things to pay for than a $8.50 movie ticket, like gas," Solomon Parker (10) said.

Complaining customers are not a new feature in the theater.

"We always have complaints about the [ticket] prices, when we raise them or even if we don't raise them," Marshall said. "People complain all the time."

However, whether students like it or not, ticket prices have to go up even without the addition of programs such as MoPix.

"[We raised our prices] to stay in line with competition," Dreyer said. "Our prices are pretty much the same as the other theaters around town."

With an increase in ticket prices and the already naughty tendencies of teenagers, there is speculation that the numbers of students sneaking into the theater will increase.

"I think Rave is going to have a real problem with kids sneaking in because they can't pay the movie prices now," Oxyer said.

While some additional students will decide to take the illegal route to getting into the theater, there have always been those apt to do so.

"Some people still get away with sneaking in, I don't think the actual price makes a difference," Marshall said.

For those students planning on sneaking into the theater, think twice before getting into trouble.

"Usually the people working the ticket booth can remember who bought tickets or not so they are able to catch the people sneaking in by radioing people at concessions and letting them know," Dreyer said.

Regardless of complaints about ticket prices, students will still find a way to go to the movies.

"If you want to see the new movies come out, you're going to have to pay the price to see them," Marshall said. "[Changing the prices] is not going to effect our attendance."

NEW TICKET PRICES

Friday - Saturday after 6 p.m.
$8.50 Adults
$6.50 Children age 3 to 11
$6.50 Seniors age 55 and over

Monday - Sunday before 6 p.m.
$6.50 Everyone

Monday - Thursday after 6 p.m.
$7.50 Student Discount

Graduate wins local beauty pageant, moves on to state-wide competition

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

In the summer of 2005, Danisha Luttrell ('05), having graduated from her senior year at Homestead and seeking a future in hospital administration, came to a realization that would alter the following two years of her life.

"College is very expensive," Luttrell said. "I quickly discovered that scholarships are a very important aspect for a successful future."

Four-year Honors student, volunteer at Lutheran Hospital and Key Club and theater member, Danisha was no stranger to academic success in and out of school. Knowing that the Miss America Organization offers more scholarship money per year than any other program of its type in the world, she applied for the local preliminary pageant, making a decision that she had never previously considered.

When applying for the Miss Fort Wayne pageant, Danisha began to realize that the demands of pageantry stretched far physical appearances. Immediately, she was surprised at how comprehensive the Miss Fort Wayne contest was. As an applicant, she was asked to write an extensive essay concerning the experiences she had while volunteering in the community. With no previous experience in beauty pageants to rely on, Luttrell pursued her preparations with the utmost persistence, eventually taking the stage alongside Miss Fort Wayne 2007, Tiara Kincade.

> *"Overall, the judges are looking for a real, genuine young woman who will represent her community with professionalism and grace."*
>
> Melanie Ford
> Pageant Coordinator

On Saturday, Sept. 22, she was crowned Miss Fort Wayne, walking away from Neff Hall at Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne University with a $500 scholarship.

Although Luttrell admits to enjoying the luxury of "having [her] books paid for next semester," it is the plentiful opportunities offered that attracted her to the pageant in the first place. Her title of Miss Fort Wayne has allowed her to advance her work with the Cancer Action Network and the Children's Miracle Network. In addition to such organizations, Luttrell's recent win has cast a light on her supported platform as a sophomore at the University of Saint Francis this year, "Early Detection and Prevention: Fighting Cancer Before it Fights Us."

According to Pageant Coordinator, Melanie Ford, the Miss Fort Wayne contest differs from the stereotypical beauty pageant. For example, the intellectual assessments of the competition chiefly outweigh those that involve physical appearance. More than 60% of a participant's score is determined through personal interviews with the judges, talent performances and an on-stage question.

"The girls I have met through this program are the most intelligent I have ever come across," Luttrell said.

The Miss America Organization holds such pageants on a yearly basis, emphasizing the passion of young women for community service and educational excellence.

"Overall, the judges are looking for a real, genuine young woman who will represent her community with professionalism and grace," Ford said.

In order to be eligible for even local preliminary contests, an aspiring participant must be at least 17 years of age and a senior in high school, no older than age 24, is college-bound and is not married or pregnant. The Miss Fort Wayne competition also requires that the future candidate lives in Allen County.

According to Ford, setting personal goals and striving to meet them on time is vital towards becoming a winner. Both Ford and Luttrell also observe the power of individuality, believing that being oneself is a key component because every performance may not convey the same reactions that it received in a previous situation.

"The pageant world is very subjective," Ford said. "On a different day, with different judges, the results can be very different."

As Luttrell prepares for the State competition, held in June as a week-long event in Zionsville, these values are evident in her work ethic. She continues to raise money and awareness for cancer, all-the-while readying herself for the interview portion of the Miss Indiana Pageant, which will make up 25% of her overall score. Unlike the other elements of the contest, such as the evening gown and talent displays, the interview helps the judges in determining the true personality of a contestant. It reveals not only how passionate for the community a candidate currently is, but also how they have contributed locally in the past. Luttrell suggests pageant hopefuls should start as early as they can to benefit their futures.

"Get involved in something you truly believe in," Luttrell said. "It's quality, not quantity."

Haunted hangout to relocate

Local haunt prepares for switch in scenery next Halloween season

By Hana Hawash
Writer

The Haunted Castle will be relocated at the conclusion of this Halloween season. Once used as St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church and after enduring its 28th year as a site of eerie entertainment. Recognized as one of the eight scariest Haunted Houses in America with its ghastly venue, the Haunted Castle has become a beloved holiday tradition among members of the community since its debut in 1980.

The old building was previously the St. Vincent church, but in 1969, the church was decommissioned and services were moved to St. Vincent's new location across the street. The church's parish has recently become in need of more land, planning to further develop the area by expanding a local school parking lot or adding a maintenance building. Although plans for the location are not yet finalized, they have been tentatively set and are receiving,timid feelings from those who treasure the current site.

Some students have expressed their displeasure at the relocation of this site.

"I'm very disappointed [that the castle is closing] because it's always a really fun place to go," Alexa Eubanks (11) said. "I have gone every year since middle school."

Even though the venue is filled with startling amusement and decked with terrifying decor, the most frightening factor of the Castle has been its location on the corner of Old Auburn and Wallen Roads. As the legend goes, the castle once belonged to a wealthy French family, and a man called the "Black Knight" guarded the settlers in the area, especially around the cemetery and castle. After all who lived in the castle died, it was thought to be deserted. However, 21 years later, the St. Vincent Boy Scout Troop discovered that the Black Knight's spirit was still there, protecting those over which he reigned and honoring the dead in the cemetery.

Although the fright and legend that coincide with its graveyard location will no longer add to the terror of visitors, the Haunted Castle will be rebuilt at new site, continuing to haunt future generations. The new venue, which will be more modern and clean, is expected to be finished by next October in time for the holiday rush. Should it not be complete, Mike Thomas, the castle's volunteer marketer, promises to re-vamp the Black Forest's spook appeal in order to compensate for the community's loss.

The Black Forest is a two-mile walk through the woods near the Scout Lodge and is located by the Haunted Castle's current location. The Black Forest is traditionally known to provide a more terrifying experience because its creepy effects are not retained to the confines of a building, whereas the Haunted Castle is considered by many to be merely a "fun house."

"[The Haunted Castle is] a fun house, because things that are supposed to be scary actually make you laugh," Eubanks said.

While some find humor in the scare attempts of those who work at the castle, many adventure seekers deem the current Haunted Castle as boring because it does not provide as much of a fear-provoking experience as other haunted venues around town.

"I don't think it was scary at all," Katelyn Gentry (12) said.

Although it may not be frightening to all thrill-seekers, the castle is full of other forms of entertainment that appeal to all ages. Within the walls of the dimly lit structure, three slides, along with motion sensors and hydraulics, await anxious visitors and provide for an enjoyable experience. The new venue is expected to have many of the same special effects and recreation, in addition to an elevated spook appeal that may elevate the fear factor for visitors of the establishment.

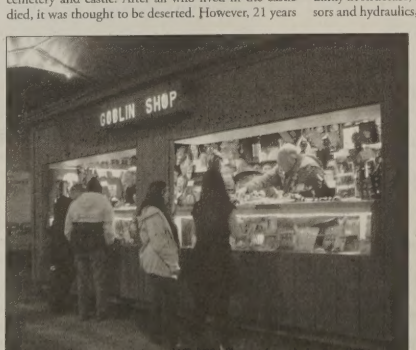

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER
Attendees of the Haunted Castle peruse the Golbin Shop, where they sell Halloween related items such as masks, jewelry, glowsticks and shirts.

As this was the last year for the Haunted Castle, marketers encouraged people of all ages and interests to experience this unique opportunity in celebration of the fall season. Because it is only mildly fear provoking, even the most squeamish should not dismiss the idea of visiting the castle. Kaylin Kopecky (12) encourages those who are skeptical of the Haunted Castle to give it a chance before they lose their opportunity to visit this significant building.

"It just plays off of people's fears of claustrophobia and fear of heights," Kopecky said.

Students remember treasured teacher

Pam Ambler, retired Woodside Middle School English teacher, suffers stroke

By Kara Hackett
Life Editor

Life is fragile. Its longevity cannot be predicted or planned for, and although it is the most valuable gift known to mankind, it can be lost in an instant.

Regrettably, for many former Woodside students and staff members, this unfortunate truth recently proved itself all too real, taking the treasured life of Pam Ambler.

Having served as a beloved English teacher at Woodside Middle School for 31 years, Ambler retired last spring at the conclusion of the school year, intending to enjoy her leisure time.

Unfortunately, however, her plans were cut short. After experiencing a stroke on the night of Thursday, Oct. 11, 2007, she was rushed to the hospital, where she passed away from a heart attack later that night.

After struggling through the shock of losing a beloved person thought by many to be invincible, family, friends, co-workers, and students grieve the loss of Pam Ambler and continue to honor her extrovert legacy.

Former principal of Woodside Middle School, Rick Smith, reveres Ambler as a woman of good humor who spoke mind her in every situation, as well as an incredible contribution to the staff.

"She was a jokester that used a lot of sarcasm," Smith said. "She liked people and liked interacting with people. She had kind of a robust personality, very outgoing for the most part. She wouldn't hold back. Anything that she thought, she would say. You always knew right away where you stood with Pam Ambler because she didn't pull any punches with you."

Smith worked with Ambler for 16 years, and continues to admire her as the former intellectual and social "anchor" of the Woodside Middle School staff.

As she was very popular among her co-workers, Ambler's death took a toll on much of the close-knit staff.

"I know it really has affected the Woodside staff … because one thing about Woodside is [that] it's pretty family-oriented, the staff, and so I think that anytime that something happens to a family member, it's pretty dramatic," Smith said. "It was a hard thing for all of us."

PHOTO BY LIFETOUCH

Several students who knew Ambler had a difficult time dealing with her sudden death also. Because she had such a dynamic personality, many students deemed Ambler's sudden decease as impossible.

Christy Tatara (11), one of Ambler's former students, found herself in complete astonishment upon hearing the tragic news concerning her beloved teacher.

"I was shocked because she seemed invincible, and I was very sad to hear the news," Tatara said. "She was one of the best [teachers], and I feel lucky to have had her."

Reaching beyond the fundamentals of teaching, Ambler had a unique style in which she provoked learning in a humorous fashion that appealed to students of all personalities.

"[Mrs. Ambler] knew how to connect and get through to students," Meghan O'Connor (11) said, a former student and admirer. "She was the teacher I want to become."

Having inspired so many people, Ambler retired with the greatest prestige, leaving decades of students with the confidence to believe in themselves and value their individualism.

Being a strong woman herself, Ambler often displayed her affection for her students in her signature wit.

"She was just pretty unique," Smith said. "She was sarcastic and on the outside she appeared to be a grump. She would give you a hard time and all that sort of thing, but on the inside, she was really pretty soft, sensitive, and liked working with kids. She had a way that she could give the kids a hard time and they loved it because I think they knew that underneath she really loved them too and really cared about them as individuals."

Tatara and other students continue to esteem Ambler's vibrant personality and recall countless memories from her unforgettable class.

"I loved that she named her projector 'Gertrude,' Tatara said. "She was so funny and spirited. She showed me how important it is to be yourself."

Ambler understood that, in one's teen years, there are many struggles to overcome and temptations to resist, and the decisions one makes now will shape one's future, for the better or the worse.

Encouraging students to reach beyond their expectations for themselves, Ambler urged them to discover their true desires for their lives and to stop at nothing until they meet their goals.

"She encouraged kids to of course be their best and not be lazy," Smith said. "Beyond that, I think she would want kids to make sure that they're doing in life what they wanted to do in life. [She would encourage them to] not let other things get in the way and not let society's perspective on things tilt your perspective on things. Stand up for yourself, and make sure you get out of life what you want to get out of life."

For many students, knowing that Pam Ambler believed in them, gave them motivation to live up to their highest expectations for themselves and to strive to resist the influence public opinion.

"I still look at her comment in my eighth-grade yearbook and I'm trying to live up to it," O'Connor said. "She wrote, 'Good times and good work! Keep it up! You will go far- I hope!'"

Traditional senior year changes face, not just slacking

By Taylor Harruff
Life Editor

Between the craziness of applying for college, maintaining a decent GPA and trying to enjoy priceless moments with friends, one has to question, what happened to senior year?

Already more than nine weeks into the 2007-2008 school year, many seniors find themselves at a loss for words as to how quickly time flies.

"This year has really been great, we have had lots of days off," Gagan Chera (12) said. "Senior year is the best so far!"

Only to add to the dwindling timeframe of our last high school year, a great amount of the 2008 class is either graduating a semester early and beginning the trek into the whole new world that is college, or attending school half day, either to work for the rest or take a class at a local university.

"I plan on going full day the whole year," Lauren Farmer (12) said. "I will get the full senior experience that way."

Although those who are taking college classes or working for half of the school day are praised and looked upon are responsible individuals, this may not be the right choice for everyone. Senior year will be over in the blink of an eye and cutting the time shorter is not for everyone.

"I have enough credits to graduate early, but I don't want to miss out on anything since it is my last year," Farmer said.

Senior year is about the last football games and declaring "Spartan Pride" for the last time. It is walking those ever so crowded hallways with a sense of accomplishment. Seniors are supposed to look back and laugh at the insane amounts of money spent on prom attire, and the memorable moments out on the dance floor. It is about the dread of waking up early, only to sit in a pointless art class, taken just to fill time. No matter how one remembers senior year, one must actually be in school to do so.

"I figured the desire to be done with high school would be so much greater," Mason Hunter (12) said. "Instead it just feels strange, I am an adult. It's weird that everything is going to change."

Now, more than ever, students are taking advantage of the opportunities given to get a jumpstart into college. Seniors, and even some juniors are given the chance to take part in the Higher Education program, which enables students to enroll at a local community college, and begin courses there. They can also participate in the Anthis Career Center program. Students can leave school before or after a half day in order to attend a field of specified work for the remaining part of the day. Also, seniors are given the choice to CO-OP. This allows for seniors to take four classes at Homestead, one of which being the CO-OP class, then leave after half a day to work a certain number of hours. Not only can seniors participate in any of the above, those who are applicable can also graduate one semester early, and begin college during second semester.

"Though I could [go half day], I go full day because I have important classes I am taking," Chera said.

Though one may feel it is in their best interest to end senior year early, it is important to take into account the memories that will be shared, and the times that can never be replaced.

"I am really looking forward to all the benefits that come with being a senior," Farmer said. "Being the oldest in school always feels good."

CARTOON BY SHANE LUTTRELL

SENIOR SCHEDULE BY MONTH

November: Submit applications with a December 1st deadline

December: Begin to review and study for final exams

January: FAFSA meeting on the 24th concerning financial aid tips and filing of information

February: File FAFSA by the 28th to guarantee making deadline

May: AP exams the first week of the month. Inform colleges of the final decison and send out deposit checks and housing

June: Graduation on the 7th at 7:00pm at the Memorial Coliseum

Students frustrated with drastic temperature changes

By Derek Luttrell
Writer

Complaints about the drastic climatic changes throughout the school have been a problem for years now, often resulting in matters from the lack of student atsire due to the apprehension of embarrassing perspiration, to layering up with large, "distractive" clothing; neither of which are satisfactory by administrative standards.

What seems to be the biggest annoyance among students about the temperature changes around the school is the issue over clothing.

"[The temperatures] are so frustrating because it makes it so difficult to know what type of outfit to wear, not knowing what your classes are going to feel like that day," Courtney Blosser (10) said.

Although it seems like each class has its own unique temperature based on the teacher's wants, that is not the case.

"Teachers should have their own thermostats that they could change whenever they need to," Jenna Banas (10) said. "That way, [teachers] could cater to their own, and all the students' needs.

In reality, according to Pete Carteaux, the head maintenance engineer, only the teachers in the Freshmen Academy have their own thermostats.

"Since the Academy is the newest addition to the school, the rooms there do have the luxury of setting their own temperatures," Carteaux said. "But, the general temperature of the school is set at 72 degrees, and teachers are only able to set their rooms to plus or minus two degrees from that. If we didn't do that, than things would get real expensive and it keeps the teachers and students from messing with the temperatures."

> *"Since the Academy is the newest addition to the school, the rooms there do have the luxury of setting their own temperatures."*
>
> Pete Carteaux
> Head Maintenance Engineer

Some, like Steve Winebrenner, Pre-Calculus with Trigonometry and Discrete math teacher in the 10-12 building, believe their rooms to be colder than they should be.

"[In my room,] the back wall is lined with windows, and especially when the colder weather comes, the windows most likely play a factor in the temperature of the room," Winebrenner said. "I also know that my hallway is very close to one of the blowers, which could also be a logical explanation."

Windows or no windows, the temperature of the classroom relatively does not change.

"In general, windows don't really have much to do with how hot or cold the room is," Carteaux said. "The only thing that might play a factor is when the sun shines through, it radiates through the entire room, which I know can make it pretty warm. We also discourage opening any windows because the humidity circles through the surrounding classrooms and ends up messing up the entire hallway."

Divided between rooms in the Freshmen Academy, there are about two air blowers per room, depending on the size and location.

In the main school building, the divided blowers come out to approximately three per classroom.

"With the school being so large, it is difficult to get the same kind and amount of air blown to each room," Cardeaux said. "It is especially difficult to get enough air into the older parts of the building, like the computer labs."

The thought of the indoor weather during the school day is not in the minds of all students.

"I've never really thought much of it," Kristen Hadley (11). "It's never really bothered me."

One of the main grievances among staff and students at Homestead regarding the climate is how cold the cafeteria is.

"The cafeteria is kept cool because when 6 or 700 people are put in there at one time, it would get real uncomfortable for everyone if it wasn't that way," Cardeaux said. "The school is universally set at 72 degrees. If a room feels like it is at a unusual marker off of that, it is probably from either kids messing with the thermostats on the wall, or the equipment is just too old."

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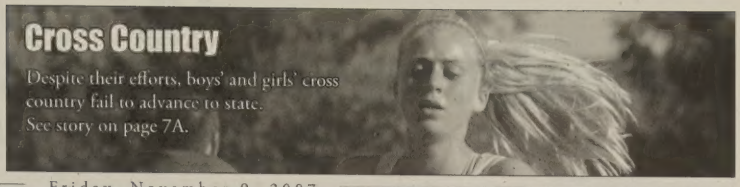
Sports

Cross Country

Despite their efforts, boys' and girls' cross country fail to advance to state.
See story on page 7A.



Friday, November 9, 2007

Joe Gallmeyer (10) reaches to kick the ball during the boys' first semi-state game against Plymouth. The boys won against Plymouth, but they were unable to beat Goshen for the semi-state championship.

LOST OPPORTUNITIES

Boys' soccer fails to advance past semi state after win against Plymouth, loss against Goshen

By Nick Arnold
Sports Editor

In every sport, there exists a pinnacle of achievement. Both elusive and desirable, this pinnacle can range from a personal goal to an international championship. For most all high school athletics, this pinnacle exists as a state championship. This pinnacle is out of the question for many programs. But for the few teams that possess the talent required, a state championship exists not as a dream, but rather, a very realistic goal. On Saturday, Oct. 20, the boys' soccer team fell two games short of their realistic goal, culminating an otherwise record-tying season.

Even though the team failed to advance to the title game, they became the second regional champions in school's history. After a decisive 2-0 victory over Plymouth in the first round of semi-state, the boys had one goal in mind: state.

"We were in control against Plymouth for the entire game," Jacob Schmidt (12) said. "We never felt threatened at all."

The team was fueled by a large amount of spectators, due in part to the proximity of the cross-country semi state to their game. Fans from around the region converged on Fort Wayne to support their respective teams. For the boys' soccer team, it was an added bonus.

"The cross-country meet brought a lot more people than a normal game," Chris Gerber (12) said. "It meant more soccer fans, but was never a distraction."

After their morning success against Plymouth, the team was provided a four hour window to rest before the final semi-state match-up. To recover, the team played video games and rested in preparation for the upcoming game.

"It helped that we had a window between games," Eric Mendenhall (12) said.

As the team took the field against Goshen on Saturday, they felt prepared to handle any obstacle that might come their way. Unfortunately, they were unable to respond to the eventual semi-state champions. Kegan Harkenrider (10) scored a goal, his second of the semi-state tournament, within the first two minutes of the game. But the team's quick lead dissipated within the next ten minutes. When Goshen's Jacob Heilliger scored two goals within five minutes of each other, the team encountered a one goal deficit that they were never able to erase.

"The game just slipped away from us in the first half," Schmidt said. "Goshen could just sit back and play defense. We just couldn't make it happen."

> *"The game just slipped away from us in the first half. Goshen could just sit back and play defense. We just couldn't make it happen."*
>
> **Jacob Schmidt**
> Senior

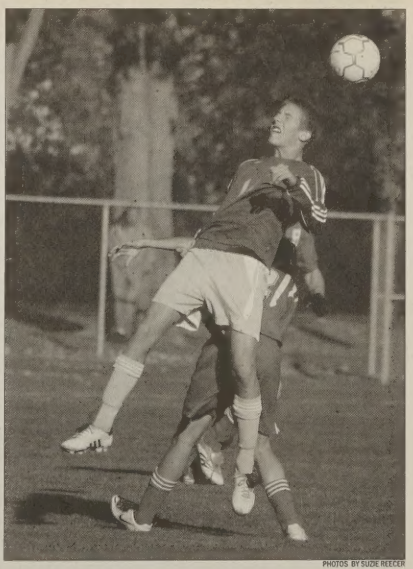
With three corner shots versus Goshen's one, the team saw a couple of possible goals. But none of their shots found the net, cutting short the team's otherwise successful season.

"We had a couple of nice shots, but none of them got in," Mendenhall said.

Even with the disappointment of the semi-state loss, the team's accomplishments over the course of the season are indeed admirable. After recovering from a close defeat against rival Canterbury, the team became the only Fort Wayne team to advance to semi-state.

"We were actually looking forward to playing Canterbury in the postseason," Schmidt said. "But our disappointment over Canterbury was minor compared to our good postseason run."

"Overall, the team is proud of what we accomplished," Mendenhall said. "But we still feel a little disappointed we didn't make it all the way to state."



PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER

Grant Welter (11) plays defense by head-butting the ball against Plymouth. This was the boys' second regional soccer championship in school history.

Vikings defeat football team second time this season

Spartans end season with sectional loss against Huntington North in spite of two touchdown runs

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Logan Laughlin (11) powers through two Viking defenders.

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

The team with the most turnovers loses- a phrase that just about every football coach has told his team. Every once in a while, the team with the most turnovers will win the ball game, but this situation usually requires a miracle to win. The boys' varsity football team's first round sectional game against Huntington North was a perfect example of such a situation.

The Spartans were looking to redeem themselves after a stunning season opener loss to the Vikings on Aug. 17, in which they were defeated 21-14. Since the loss to the Vikings, the Spartans produced an impressive series of victories and won the Northeast Hoosier Conference. The Vikings went into the game with an identical 8-1 record.

"We prepared by watching film from when we played them to their previous opponents," Chad Zolman, coach, said. "We knew they were going to be better from game one to game ten."

The team's main focus going into the game was to make sure they were executing on both sides of the ball. Another focus was to take care and protect the football.

In the first half, the Spartans had trouble doing both. On the opening drive they marched down the field to the Viking 20 yard line before a fumble by Charles Seals (12) gave the ball to Huntington North. The Vikings took advantage of the turnover and created their own scoring drive. Later on, a muffed punt would lead to another Vikings score to extend the lead. At halftime, up 28-0, the Vikings had diminished Spartan hopes in the first half.

"At halftime we made a few assignment changes on defense," Zolman said. "Our defense also was a focus point for the second half."

The defense did step up in the second half, but the offense still struggled to click. After a scoreless third quarter by either team, the Spartans finally found a little life in the fourth, with two touchdown runs by Logan Laughlin (11). His two touchdowns would not be enough, as the Vikings ran out the clock, and the season on the Spartans. The Vikings came out of the game victorious, with a score of 31-14. For the first time since Marion in 1999, a team other than Snider knocked the Spartans out of the sectional tournament.

"I'm obviously disappointed with being out," Laughlin said. "We did have a good season and we will work hard for next year."

For next season, the team will have to go through workouts and determine how vacancies produced by this year's seniors will be filled. With a season of experience under his belt, Laughlin will prove to be a vital asset to next year's team and Zolman will continue to emphasize the importance of turnovers and their relation to success.

Wanted: active student section

As the clock ticked to zero and I sat and stared in disbelief, the football team marched solemnly off the field after their season-ending loss to the Huntington North Vikings. I couldn't believe it. After attending almost every game this year and watching this team win a conference title and go 8-1 on the season, it was over. After putting in so much effort all season, and now their dream of a repeat sectional championship was dashed by the running game and defense of the Vikings.

Problem was, I wasn't alarmed by loss of the football team. I was alarmed at how appalling our student section was. It was almost offensive. The football team received no help from us whatsoever. When they went down early in the game, the students should have been there to cheer them on. But no, we quit on the team. Instead of standing and being obnoxious, we sat down and talked about our postgame plans, who we were going to start on our fantasy team this week, how many points Notre Dame would lose by and what shampoo is best for brown, medium-length, wavy hair.

By Chris Ray
Sports Editor

At first glance, many of you are thinking, "Well, gee, I would say our student section is pretty good." Sure, we have painter boys, and ok, many girls wear the white football jerseys of their favorite guy, but we have no consistency. No desire to cheer through the rougher times. Sadly, by the end of the game, only one painter boy did pushups for the final Spartan touchdowns and a few "jersey" girls spent some time in the bathrooms when they could have supported the team instead. No matter what the score is of a game, we, students, need to be there for the athletes. The worst feeling in the world for an athlete is to know your fans have lost faith in you. It's also the worst feeling in the world to know that there were more band parents standing up during the halftime performance than there were students standing up during the game. It not only hurts to know they don't care, but it also gives you the feeling that the game is over and that there is no point in you finishing your game, or season, strong.

Periodically, I would take a gander at the Huntington North stands, and each time I was amazed. The bleachers seemed to rock with the movement from their student section. It was almost as though those bleachers were caught in an earthquake. They were boisterous, rambunctious, rowdy; any synonym of loud. It may help that their team was winning the first round of sectionals, but at that moment, our students needed to rise up and meet the challenge. We should have raised the excitement level so the team could get their swagger back.

Now, the question remains, is the student section too 'cool' to do such things as yell and scream? What does it take for a couple hundred students to stand and cheer on their athletic teams? Does it take a good team? Obviously not, because the football team was 8-1, Northeast Hoosier Conference champions, and they were the defending sectional champions. Does it take players who can excite the crowd? With Charles Seals (12), Brandon Derck (12), Ryan Wright (12) and Ross Heckber (12), the team has playmakers coming from every which way, but that's apparently not worthy of some hollering from the students.

Here is a challenge for all of you: redeem yourselves. Get together, get creative, paint, make up cheers, do whatever you need to do to put some life into the student section at athletic events. Think of a clever name to call the section, whether it be from the movie 300 or whatever, I don't care. One thing is for certain. We, as students, need to come together and get excited about our sports teams. Homestead has many successful programs and many exciting teams. Be obnoxious, be raucous, be intense. Break out of that stereotype of cheering at an athletic event as being un-cool. As an athlete myself, I know I want people at my games cheering me on. It pleases us to know we are being supported by the school.

All other area schools put Homestead to shame when it comes to school spirit. Do we want to be known as the school who just doesn't seem to care? Or are we going to make teams fear coming to our school to play games? It's simple. Just go out and make it happen. seem to care? Or are we going to make teams fear coming to our school to play games? It's simple. Just go out and make it happen.

cross country falls short

Boys, girls underperform at semi-state

PHOTO BY MARGARET SADLER

Colin Lyman (11) and Rio Magana (10) work to keep up with teammate Donny Heath (10) as he strides up an incline at the semi-state race on Oct. 20.

By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

The boys' and girls' cross country teams failed to move past semi-state on Saturday, Oct. 27. The boys placed 18th out of 20 teams while the girls placed sixteenth.

"Some individuals did really well, but others did not have their best races of the season," Meghan Terrell (11) said.

At sectionals and regionals the girls' cross country team was led by Meghan Terrell; however at semi-state, the teams' leading runners were Carolyn Mutton (10) and Ali Kattman (11). Mutton finished at 21:08; she placed 64th. Right behind her was Kattman, who finished at 21:09, placing 65th. The duo ran together for most of the race, working with each other to advance in the field as much as they could.

> *"Some individuals did really well, but others did not have their best races of the season"*
>
> **Meghan Terrell (11)**
> Varsity Runner

Since only the top five runners score for each team, Terrell did not score for the team. Finishing with a time of 22:54, she had the lowest place of the seven runners at 115th. At regionals, Terrell placed tenth by running the course in 20:15.

"For semi-state I definitely did not do as well as I did in sectionals and regionals," Terrell said. "I was really expecting to have my time under 20 minutes, and along with the team we were all expecting to have a really good race but instead we didn't quite meet our goals."

The four other runners, Rachel Taylor (12), Katrina Schreiber (9), Chloe Smith (10) and Laura Donnell (10) placed 85th, 94th, 110th and 114th respectively. Taylor finished at 21:36 followed by Schreiber at 21:06, Smith at 22:46 and Donnell at 22:50.

The top five runners gave the girls' cross country team 418 points, 45 places behind Pendleton Heights at 373. After the team's first sectional championship in ten years, the outcome of the semi-state race was dissapointing. Despite the final results, the girls were proud of their accomplishments over the season.

The boys had a similar performance at semi-state. Kodi Mullins (9), who finished with a time of 17:15 and placed 53rd, led the team. Mullins had been the top runner for the Spartanas throughout most of the season, with key performances at sectionals and regionals where he placed sixth and tenth respectively.

The two seniors who contributed in the post season were Saalfrank and Brian Graham (12) who placed 72nd and 73rd at regionals respectively. Both the senior runners finished at 17:41. Last year, the boys' team placed 15th at semi-state, and have come to a similar end this year.

"We thought we might be able to make it out [of semi-state], and then we got 18th out of 20," Brandon Saalfrank (12) said.

The two other scoring runners for the team were Colin Lyman (11) and Donny Heath (10). Lyman ran 18:13, placing 102nd. Heath ran 18:27, placing 108. The team earned a total of 408 points.

"They will be pretty good next year with Evan Hanley (11) coming back from Germany," Saalfrank said. "If they put the effort into it they could make it [past semi-state]."

For the past three years, both the boys' and the girls' cross country teams have made it to semi-state; however, they have not been able to advance any farther.

This season's performance at semi-state ended another successful year for the team, but they both expect no less next year when they will return with a combined loss of only four varsity seniors.

Look for leadership from current underclassmen Terrell, Kattman, Mutton, Mullins, Heath, Lyman and others for a strong showing in the 2008 season.

Winter Sports Previews

Basketball

The final girls' team was set on Nov. 1 after five days of tryouts. They will be hosting Dwenger next Friday for their first game of the year. Boys' tryouts started Nov. 5 in preparation for their season opener on Nov. 28, when they face off against Harding. Both sets of Spartans must recover from losing key players from last season.

Cheerleading

Tryouts for the basketball season cheer squad were held on Nov. 7 and 8.

Wrestling

Heavy weights and 108s united for their first official practice on Oct. 29 to prepare for their opening match vs. DeKalb.

Gymnastics

Conditioning began Nov. 5 for gymnasts.

Swim & Dive

The girls swim against Concordia next week to begin their season. The boys' first workout of the season was Nov. 5. Both the girls' and boys' return to competition over Thanksgiving weekend for an informal team-building intersquad meet. The teams will be looking for the six divers to contribute points at meets this season.

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Friday, November 30, 2007

With the holidays approaching, students are finding it is

THE SEASON OF GIVING

givingsupport

S.T.A.N.D.

chapter formed to fight genocide in Darfur, Africa

By Ashley Heath
Writer

A bloody battle between the Sudanese government and two Darfurian rebel groups rages on, throwing their country into turmoil. As the death rate continues to climb from violence, disease and displacement, concern spreads throughout the international community and has reached the halls of Homestead High school.

Celia Grundman (10), founder and president of the group, held an informational meeting on Nov. 13 initiating her newly formed chapter of Students Taking Action Now: Darfur (STAND), a global organization committed to fighting genocide around the world.

While the group promises to enlist about 20 members, each has their own reason for participating.

"I'm Jewish," Becky Katz (10) said. "With the history of the Holocaust, I know it's important to raise awareness about what is going on and [to] try to help in any way."

While Victoria Neukam (9) has no religious attachment, she feels compelled to participate out of a general

SEE STAND on page 2A

ORIGINAL PHOTO WWW.STANDNOW.ORG

BRIEFS

WE THE PEOPLE STATE

The state competition for We the People will take place on Dec. 17 in Indianapolis. The competition will test the participant's knowledge of the United States Constitution. Students will be judged on a question and answering round. Keith Potter's We the People team qualified for the state competition by placing first in state's third congressional district. The group will compete against eleven other teams. Last year, students and Potter won sixth place at the state competition.

SEMI FORMAL 2007

Semi Formal 2007 will take place Saturday, Dec. 15. The dance will last from 7:30 p.m. until 11:30 p.m., a half an hour earlier than dances from past years. The theme is 'Dancing in the Moonlight' and will be decorated to match. Charly Butcher is the DJ. Tickets will cost 20 dollars each.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The College Board recently reported Homestead as having one the top success rates in AP testing in the areas of math, science and technology. Due to this high level of success, the school is able to apply for the Siemens Award for Advanced Placement. Only one school from each state is able to win this award. The award is based on the school's ability to provide opportunities for students to enroll and achieve in AP math and science classes.

SEMESTER SCHEDULING

Students are encouraged to verify their second semester schedules within the next few weeks. Student schedules can be viewed online through Powerschool. Counselors will accept schedule changes through Dec. 18 and any requests can be submitted via e-mail or students may pick up an information sheet in the main office. Requests to change teachers or electives will be considered by space availability only.

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givingfeedback

Administrators reveal daily duties, various responsibilities

By Celia Grundman
Writer

A typical day at school begins with Principal Rick Smith hard at work before the doors even open. Soon Tom Rhoades, dean of students, will be walking the halls; a part of his morning routine.

"It's kind of silly, actually. I get around the building in the morning and make sure there aren't suspicious things around the school," Rhoades said.

While Rhoades briefly patrols the halls, Smith begins his work.

"I'm responsible for the whole picture and assistants are broken into different areas," Smith said.

As the morning progresses, more staff members file in to the school and begin their busy mornings. Among them is Jennifer Bay, one of Homestead's three vice principals.

"[Vice principals] oversee different departments. I have visual and performing arts, the math department and the business department," Bay said.

These responsibilities keep the schedules of administrators full all day long.

"We're constantly busy. We supervise activities and are tied up a lot," Smith said. "I have lots of meetings with staff department heads, teachers, fellow administrators and the central office."

Besides holding meetings throughout the school day, administrators often observe classes.

"I also observe classes for staff evaluation, with follow-ups afterwards to offer suggestions. Teachers don't get to see other teachers teach, so it's an enjoyable part of my job," Smith said.

Meanwhile, Rhoades has his time consumed by other areas of school operations.

SEE STAFF on page 2A

givingmoney

Working with local charities allows students to give back to community

By Hana Svetlovics
Writer

With 21 days until winter break, a charitable atmosphere fills the air. While entering the grocery store, the familiar sound of Salvation Army bells are heard. Movies and television shows convey the theme of giving. Although "charitable" is not usually an adjective that comes to mind to describe teenagers, Student Government is trying to change that this holiday season.

Student Government hopes to raise enough money to provide needy families with everything necessary for the holidays.

"Money is being raised for two families," senior class representative Katie Buschman (12) said. "We're buying clothes, toys and things they need for a good Christmas."

Each teacher has been given a box to collect money from students in their fifth period class. The last day to collect money is Monday, Dec. 3. The three classes that raise the most money will be rewarded with a pizza party. This is the first year all classes will participate in the Adopt-A-Family charity.

"To get everything we need, it will be 350 dollars for each family" senior class representative Sarah Libbing (12) said.

While fifth period classes are only responsible for two families, student government is in charge of their own family.

"We also have our own family to pay for," Buschman said, "and each person has to bring in 20 dollars."

When all the money is collected and counted, Student Government will then buy the supplies.

"We'll get a small group and go buy things over a weekend or winter break," Buschman said.

The group plans to go shopping on Saturday, Dec. 8.

Shopping can be a challenge because each family assigned by the adoption agency is made up of a different number of boys and girls.

"They give us a list of boys and girls and we see what they want and need, but we don't know their names," Libbing said.

After the presents are bought, the next step is delivering the gifts to the families.

"When we have all of the things the family needs," Libbing said, "we'll take it to the Adopt-A-Family agency, and they'll give it to the family."

Although Student Government is trying to increase community service among students, some have already taken the initiative to help others.

"Every spring break, my youth group goes to West Virginia and works with Habitat for Humanity," Lauren Bachle (12) said.

Much more time is put in the Habitat for Humanity project than the trip itself. A committee is formed shortly after winter break to start planning the trip.

SEE CHARITIES on page 2A

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Student government members Cody Prezbindowski (12) and Michael Sorenson (9) total the money donated for the Adopt A Family project after their fifth period collection on Monday.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

"We're all pretty fortunate in where we live and where we go to school, so through Adopt-a-Family we can help those less fortunate to have a better holiday season."

-Phil Reiman (12)
President of Student Government

Election reflection, notes for the future

By Flor Ortega
Writer

You walk up to the booth and take a look at the computer that is now within your reach. The time has come when many students finally have a say in the future of their democratic country. But many just-turned-18 year olds have little to no idea for whom they are choosing between.

Adolescents are often encouraged to vote, the process is usually presented upon them with enthusiasm and the importance of the individual's vote is reinforced.

"I do believe that my opinion matters because every vote counts; there is no excuse to not vote. Everyone's opinion matters," Christie Warren (12) said.

When it comes to voting there is no right or wrong answer. Voting is simply each citizen's opportunity to speak his or her mind through the support of a candidate of their choice.

Katie O'Keefe (12) conveys uncertainty regarding the importance of a single vote.

"If I decided not to vote, the elected candidate wouldn't change; but, if we all went into [the election] with that mindset, tons of people wouldn't vote and a difference would be made, so, somehow my opinion really does matter," O'Keefe said.

Once students reached the age of 18, it is considered an obligation as a member of a democratic society to vote. In order to vote you must first be registered; however, adolescents often do not have the time or initiative to do so.

"I didn't get around to registering so I didn't vote and I really don't know much about the election," O'Keefe said. "I do plan on voting in the future."

Levi Bollinger (12) chose to actively participate is Tom Henry's political campaign. To aid in the campaign, Bollinger went door-to-door distributing information about Henry in an attempt to educate voters and eventually gain their support.

"Being an active part of the political process, I learned a lot about the candidates and about my own political views," Bollinger said.

He also had the opportunity to be in a commercial for Tom Henry's campaign. "I got to say, 'I'm casting my first vote for Tom Henry'," Bollinger said.

By actively participating the election process, Bollinger took advantage of America's democratic system.

Regardless of the outcome of any particular election, there will always complaints about the results.

"It really bothers me when people take an apathetic stand on politics and then complain about decisions made by elected officials when they did not take actions to keep them from being elected into office," Bollinger said.

Voting is an individual rite that each citizen can choose to exercise. Although teens often overlook this rite, those who vote find it to be both an educational and rewarding experience.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO GET REGISTERED:

See any government teacher; they have copies of voter registration forms.
Once you've filled in a form you can turn it into them and they will mail it.
Or you can mail it in yourself to the voter registration office.
Get out there and VOTE!!

STAND Cont. from page 1A

compassion for the victims.

"I came to support the cause and Darfur," Neukam said. "I've heard really sad stories about the women being raped and their children being raped in front of them. It's just terrible."

Grundman says her idea to start the group was the result of a growing concern for the victims of Darfur. A general interest led her to research the issue more thoroughly. As she learned about activist organizations involved with the conflict, such as STAND, her simple plan to raise money by selling t-shirts turned into an aspiration to raise awareness and support by creating her own small activist group.

But Grundman plans to reach out to more than just her fellow classmates.

"I don't want this to be just within the school; I want it to be in the Fort Wayne community," Grundman said.

In addition to organizing these local events, Grundman manages to keep an eye on national activity.

"I think [the US] really should encourage the [United Nations-African Union] troops that are going over there and should provide more humanitarian funding," Grundman said.

"The US has actually done the best job so far, but more always needs to be done."

Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine the condition of a country half way around the world that is so different from ours and raising awareness is one of their primary goals.

"At the very least, I want to get the entire school to take a good 5 minutes out of their texting time to really think about what life is like for someone else their age who is in a refugee camp in Africa," Jocelyn Craig (11), the Vice President of the group, said.

"I joined this group to make people aware of the world outside of their four walls of American Eagle," Craig said.

To help them transcend those walls, Mango juice and Sudanese cake were served at the meeting, offering the attendees a taste of the place they are trying to save. The members also received a packet detailing the history of the Darfurian conflict and information about genocide in general.

A governing system was set up and their objectives were defined as the group began to formulate and carry out their ambitious agenda.

The group's four objectives are to "increase consciousness, both nationally and abroad, about presently occurring genocides, to take nonpartisan political action for a swift and sustainable solution to the crisis, to raise funds for humanitarian relief of refugees and internally displaced persons and to coordinate national and international efforts to achieve the three goals above."

The group hopes to accomplish their goal by writing letters to the editor, running awareness campaigns, setting up screenings of movies pertaining to the genocide, participating in protests and hosting fundraisers and rallies.

While the group hopes to raise a sizable amount to donate to the cause, awareness of the injustices overseas is their primary goal.

"I want to fuel people's passions, not take some spare change from their pocketbooks," Craig said.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 4 in Room 123.

S.T.A.N.D. FACTS

6 REGIONAL CONFERENCES WILL BE HOSTED AROUND THE NATION IN 2008

FEB 8-10 MID ATLANTIC CONFERENCE, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

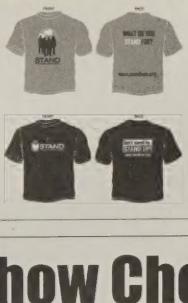
FEB 15-17 WEST COAST CONFERENCE, DAVIS, CALIFORNIA

FEB 15-17 MIDWEST CONFERENCE, AUSTIN, TEXAS

FEB 22-24 SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

FEB 29-MARCH 2 NORTHEAST CONFERENCE, WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

FEB 29-MARCH 2 GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE, CLEVELAND OHIO



CHARITIES Cont. from page 1A

The week before the trip, the committee, in essence, lives in the church in order to prepare and organize the food they take with them.

"We spend the week in West Virginia building and repairing houses and getting to know the families around the area we work in," Bachle said. "I've been doing this for the past three years and plan on doing this trip again this spring break."

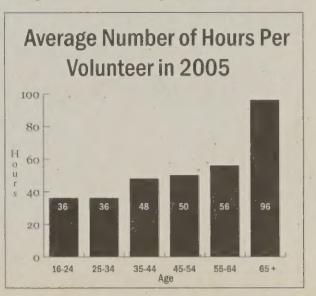
While fifth period classes are given the incentive of a pizza party for being charitable, rewards are not always the motivation for extra work.

"I volunteer because it is just something we should do," Bachle said. "Every person deserves a decent home to live in. We should all strive to make this goal a reality."

There are many opportunities to volunteer your time and money in our community. Community Harvest Food Bank accepts single volunteers as well as group volunteers year round. Visiting nursing homes and hospices offers a personal experience with terminal patients in our area.

Another option for those eager to volunteer is to join the school's Key Club. To receive credit for the club, a member must complete a minimum of 40 community service hours.

The opportunities to volunteer in the surrounding area are abundant. While volunteering helps those in need, those volunteering also benefit. Not only do volunteer hours strengthen college applications, they also benefit the giver in a more intangible way. The benefits from donating to charity and helping others can only be appreciated by those who chose to participate in a charitable act. Take the opportunity this holiday season to better yourself and your community by helping out those who are less fortunate.



STAFF Cont. from page 1A

"The vast majority of my time is spent on student referrals and meetings with students to solve any issues," Rhoades said. "I'm in charge of facility use forms."

As a dean of students, Rhoades finds it particularly tiresome punishing students.

"It's difficult. All you do is deal with the negative," Rhoades said. "Still, I keep realizing that most kids never do anything wrong."

Other administrators deal with different issues.

"We're constantly scheduling class sizes. Ninth grade was the worst this year. Next year we'll have the scheduling process a little sooner for ninth grade," Smith said.

Bay enjoys this process.

"I enjoy problem-solving," Bay said. "We [administrators] try to help as many students as we can. I'm able to do a little more because this year, with the help of the deans, I have less disciplinary work."

One of the issues the administration has recently worked on fixing is the large number of tardies that Homestead students have accumulated this year. Smith, though reluctant at first, eventually agreed to a Student Government proposal that would attempt to lower the number of late arrivals.

Homestead's administrators will continue to work everyday to solve the various problems that are bound to occur in a school of over 2000 students, from early in the morning until long after the last bell has rung.

Show Choir educates next generation

Hana Svetlovics
Writer

Being in show choir takes many skills. Besides being able to sing and dance, one must train themselves to appeal to a judge in stance and facials. A member also has to be willing to give up two afternoons a week and occasionally, weekend mornings.

On Saturday, November 17th Class Royale and Elite members met in the choir room to prepare for the arrival of show choir clinic participants. Any third through eighth grader in the Southwest Allen County School District was allowed to participate.

The participants arrived at 8 a.m. and were taken to the cafeteria to change into matching T-shirts and to meet the others in their grades. Each group was under the care of current show choir members as they rotated stations throughout the day.

The stations included learning choreography, getting hair done, playing games, eating lunch, and learning vocal parts for a song. Although this seems like an easy schedule, some parts of the day were hectic for leaders.

"My group was the first to go to the dance studio, and I didn't have all of my 7th graders yet," Elite member Amanda Jacobs (10) said. "So I was worried that I wouldn't have enough time to reteach every time someone else came in."

While time was limited at each station, for most groups it was not an issue.

"The day of clinic, we were given approximately two and a half hours throughout the day to teach the choreography." Class Royale member Ashley Evans (10) said. "The kids caught on extremely fast! I was very pleased with their ability to work."

While the day was a lot of work, there were still many moments that made the day fun. Stylists from Masters of Cosmetology were enlisted to do all of the performers' hair, including Elite and Class Royale members.

"…We went to the cafeteria where all the girls--including the Elite members in my group-- got their hair done," Jacobs said. "I have to admit, that was one of the least stressful moments of the day."

Those dedicated to show choir agreed that the day was very useful to future show choir members.

"I believe the program gives kids expecting to join high school show choir a peek into what show choir's all about," Evans said. "It's extremely beneficial not only to recruit members but also to enhance their singing and dancing abilities."

Many would say the day was a waste for current show choir members, but those that took their task seriously saw the benefits of the day.

"[Show choir clinic] gives us as members a chance to see things from a choreographer's eyes," Elite member Melody Bledsoe (11) said. "And gives participants an insight to what's waiting for them in years to come."

A common problem for the leaders was the lack of boys in each group.

"I think there were not enough boys in each group because it seems as if once they start getting older, they think it is stupid and girly, when in reality, it's not," Class Royale member Cameron Winters (11) said.

Similar to clinic, Class Royale is also lacking boys.

"It's hard to find enough boys to fill the show choir, and I think there aren't enough boys," Winters said. "We only have 19 [boys] right now, and it would be nice to have more, because the number of boys in Class Royale determines how many girls can be placed in Class Royale too."

There are problems to worry about in show choir, but in the end, the experience is still worthwhile.

"Showchoir was a great choice for me, and every time I get on stage, it reminds me that all the hard work we do all year is really worth it," Jacobs said.

For what members sacrifice, many benefits are gained making it well worth the time and effort needed to be a success.

"It's really the greatest feeling in the world, standing on stage looking out into an audience of hundreds," Bledsoe said. "To put it simply, show choir is my life. I don't know what kind of person I'd be without it, but there would definitely be something great missing from my life."

PHOTO BY IAN STRELEC

Class Royale practices one of seven numbers in preparation for competitions stating January 19, at Garfield Heights, Cleveland OH.

Opinion

Nick Arnold offers his opinion on the sports dynasty that is taking the country by storm. **See story of Page 2B.**

Make your marks heavy, dark

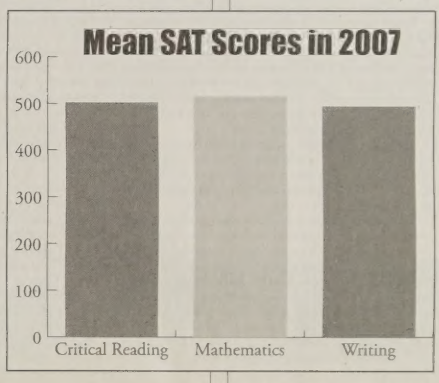
Should standardized tests mean so much?

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

High school students are a generally diverse group. They range in almost every possible aspect from appearance, to taste in music, to hobbies and activities. However, perhaps the most unifying issue for high schoolers is a genuine hatred of standardized testing. The very phrase evokes images of drawn out testing sessions with annoying bubbles and mind-numbingly dull questions. Nationwide tests such as the SAT and ACT and state tests like ISTEP are equally disliked and dreaded. Despite this, standardized tests play a key role in evaluating students from different areas and schools, as these tests are the only way to evaluate student performance on an even playing field.

Without such vital tools as ISTEP, Indiana lawmakers would have no possible way to compare the school districts across the state. Standardized tests are the only real option for lawmakers who want to evaluate performance in Indiana in order to allocate resources to improve struggling school districts and maintain high-performing ones.

Standardized test results are not only useful tools for lawmakers but teachers as well. Standardized test results can show educators where students are having difficulties, thereby allowing the teachers to target specific areas. Also, by comparing methods used in various subjects with the test results in those subjects, teachers are able to identify methodologies that are effective in conveying information while rethinking those methods that do not produce results.



One often overlooked benefit of testing programs is their relatively low cost. A California study put the cost per student of an array of standardized tests at only $2.50 to $4.50 per student depending upon the amount paid to test proctors. Given this low level of expense, tests provide a tremendous amount of usable data for children.

National initiatives, with No Child Left Behind as the primary example, focus mainly on holding schools accountable for standardized test results. Correspondingly, many feel that school systems have improved in order to avoid exposure as low-performing. Additionally, the United States has improved somewhat when scores are compared to other countries. While the United States is by no means at the head of the class, its position has improved marginally over the past years.

Critics of standardized testing often cite flaws inherent to the system such as bias toward one group of students. These claims, however, hold little weight when the tests are closely scrutinized. The fact that poorer students from bad neighborhoods score worse on tests on average is due mostly to schools failing to teach, not tests that target those students.

Another assertion critics make is that standardized testing wastes an unconscionable amount of student time. While the curriculum is not being advanced on testing days, the days devoted to testing are vital. The data they furnish compensates for the cost of the time the tests demand.

High school students will never love standardized testing. It will always be boring and kids will never look forward to sitting in a classroom for five hours reading the same passages over and over again. But these tests have become an indispensable part of education in America. So students may as well sharpen up their pencils and settle in because standardized tests are, justifiably, here to stay.

By Dylan Currie
Copy Editor

The culmination of high school is no longer graduation day and walking down the aisle, it is finishing the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). Four hours and hundreds of bubbles after entering, students walk out thinking, "that was easy." The College Board sends student scores home approximately one month after testing and high school juniors and seniors really find out something about themselves: exactly how good they are at standardized tests.

Standardized tests are tests on which all students answer the same questions, usually in multiple-choice format, and each question has only one correct answer. These tests reward the ability to quickly answer superficial questions that do not require any real thought. They do not measure the ability of a student to think or create. SAT test-makers admit both that two people with very different scores on one test administration might get the same scores on a second administration and that two student's scores must differ by at least 144 points before they are willing to say the student's measured abilities really differ. This means that, theoretically, scores of 1857 and 2000 on the 2400-point SAT are the exact same.

Standardized tests are actually based off behaviorist psychological theories from the nineteenth century. Unfortunately for the SAT and ISTEP, we live in the twenty-first century. Today, cognitive and developmental psychologists understand that knowledge is not separable bits and that people – including children – learn by connecting what they already know with what they are attempting to learn. If students cannot actively make meaning out of what they are doing, they do not learn or remember. Most standardized tests, including the SAT, ISTEP and many placement tests, are still based off of a student's recall of isolated facts and narrow skills, instead of true knowledge.

The biggest problem with standardized testing being so crucial in the educational process is simple: some students do not test well. Many high school seniors taking the SAT for college admissions purposes are affected by test anxiety or do not show their learning well on standardized tests, resulting in inaccurate and low scores.

The National Academy of Sciences has stated, "major educational decisions should not be based solely on a test score." Standardized testing punishes students, and often teachers, for things they cannot control. It drives students and teachers away from learning and at times from school. It narrows, distorts, weakens and impoverishes the curriculum while fostering forms of instruction that fail to engage students or support high-quality learning. In such an environment, the limit to educational improvement is largely dictated by the tests, but the tests are a poor measure of learning. Standardized testing cannot provide adequate information about school quality or process and actively hurts, rather than helps, genuine and irreplaceable education.

Luckily, a solution is not difficult. Rather than allowing 2400 points to decide the fate of high school students, the decision of a student's cognitive development should be based upon teacher observation, documentation of student work and performance-based assessment. Each involves the direct evaluation of student effort on real learning tasks and provides useful material for teachers, parents, community and the government.

Come to think of it, five paragraphs simply does not ever cut it for me.

Ed Board disagrees with university's policy

Censorship and thought reform belong in the history book of repressive regimes of the former Soviet Union. Unfortunately they can also be used to describe recent events at the University of Delaware.

The state-funded university has integrated a new program into their curriculum in an attempt to achieve the ultimate goal of responsible "citizenship." On the surface, it seems like an innocent, even admirable goal. However, the program requires students to participate in ideological reeducation to achieve their goal.

In one-on-one sessions, students are given a short questionnaire about themselves under the façade that the university wants to get to know them better. However the survey includes intrusive questions such as "when did you discover your sexual identity?" and encourages students to twist past events into victimizing ones, by asking "when was a time you felt oppressed?"

After the sessions, Resident Assistants (RA's) must reflect on their encounters and report to their superiors which students were the best and worst. The students who gave answers suggesting views different from the university's or even expressing discomfort and hesitancy were severely interrogated and were usually found on record as 'the worst one-on-one sessions.' Students who expressed disapproval of the sessions were written up and given incident referrals (IR).

Students are also required to display specific door decorations in order to demonstrate their conformity to the university's beliefs. These include flyers that show the students' commitment to environmentalist causes, support for a specific "oppressed" social group and their advocacy of a "sustainable world."

These requirements corroborate that it is not mere exposure to ideas; it is the enforcement and mandatory adoption of specific philosophies. The invasion of personal politics into public education is not only unconstitutional, but also unconscionable. Even more disturbing is the university's use of the term "treatment" to describe the program, as if a different belief is a sickness that students must be cured of.

The university has enlisted the RA's to administer this "treatment" and those resistant to the program are pressured to conform.

RA's are also instructed to report all student behavior that does not adhere to the values ascertained in the training guide. This inappropriate surveillance and control is frighteningly similar to George Orwell's *1984* and the ensuing Orwellian philosophy.

RA training includes defining concepts pertaining to forms of oppression and learning to recognize them. While oppression is a serious issue, the definitions provided are more than just a little off. According to the guide, the term 'racist' applies "to all white people…living in the United States" and as such "people of color cannot be racists." 'Reverse racism' is "a term created and used by white people to deny their white privilege" and therefore "there is no such thing as 'reverse racism.'" A 'non-racist' similarly does not exist and "was created by whites to deny responsibility for systemic racism, to maintain an aura of innocence in the face of racial oppression, and to shift responsibility for that oppression." In other words, all white people are racists who mask their acts of oppression by wrongly victimizing themselves.

In a world of political correctness, universities want to avoid being called 'racist' or 'discriminatory' at almost all costs in order to establish themselves as a moral authority. As a result, white people searching for a sense of ethical righteousness feel they must take responsibility for the problems of African-Americans and other minorities. This means that blacks and minorities must never be seen as equals, but constantly as victims who must be compensated.

But in fact, this does nothing to lessen the presence of racism. It fosters a society whose decisions are still based primarily on race. It portrays members of minorities who benefit from guilt-motivated diversity efforts and affirmative action programs as incapable of actually achieving things based on merit and who profit from ethical relativism. Of course, if the Ed Board expressed this at UD, we would probably be written up and labeled as racists trying to deny our white privilege and personal responsibility for racism.

Not only does the initiation of such an outrageous program signify a major shift in societal values, but those responsible for instituting the program refuse to see the blatant violation of First Amendment rights for what it is. Folding under public pressure, this program was recently terminated, but President Patrick Harker does not credit its termination to moral justifications, but rather ineffectiveness. His last words announce that the Vice President is currently determining other ways to insure the "intellectual, cultural and ethical development of [their] students," which promises that as soon as time heals their reputation and shrouds them from the public eye, similar programs may be implemented.

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The *Spartana* is a tri-weekly production of Student Publications: Newspaper at Homestead High School. Its purpose is to enlighten, educate and entertain. The *Spartana* has, and may continue to, operate as a limited open forum for the free exchange of ideas.

Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the advisor in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material which is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material distruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

The Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues, and student journalist are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas and issues in their high school, community, nation and world according to policy number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those which could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to the *Spartana* at thespartana@gmail.com or dropped off in room 620.

The Gamble of Life

By Kara Hackett
Life Editor

I am always getting lost. Whether I am choosing between college majors or driving to even the most familiar of locations, I constantly find myself struggling to choose the right path. After enduring several wrong turns and making hundreds of pathetic excuses for my deficient sense of direction, I have discovered several "just in case" methods for dealing with the disasters that coincide with my regrettable flaw. For instance, I often use the mathematically esteemed "process of elimination;" unfortunately, however, as luck would have it, most of the time when I get lost, I am already running late. Thus, I have no time to spare for critical thinking and decision making, and I often find myself simply guessing which way to go and hoping for the best. Deep down I know that my choice may not be correct and that I am risking going even further out of my way, but in the spur of the moment, that is a chance I am willing to take.

Recently, however, it seems that I am not the only one willing to tempt fate. Millions of Americans everywhere are anxiously risking everything for simple answers to all of life's questions and easy ways out of life's traffic jams. Gambling has been a boost to the social and economic welfare of many regions for centuries, and now it has begun to tempt our state in the once morally conservative Midwest. Indiana has become home to several thriving casinos, enhancing the state's tourist appeal and increasing revenues; yet, the flourishing business has become a gamble itself, forcing state officials to question the economic reliability of the source of one of Indiana's biggest entertainment industries.

In the past year, Indiana casinos have added more than $4 billion to the state's revenue, making it the state's third largest source of income. However, the dichotomy of the nature of this revenue is evident when exploring from where the money is really coming. Because casinos lure hopeful tourists, 60% of Indiana's gambling revenue comes from people who live out-of-state, placing our economic welfare subject to the possible sudden fluctuations in the gambling industry's tourist appeal. Since gamblingis outlawed in much of the Midwest, Indiana has had no trouble thus far finding victims from Kentucky, Illinois, and Michigan to feed its financial hunger. As long as casinos are in demand, the economic stability of our beloved state is rather secure. Nevertheless, if neighboring states legalize gambling and develop prosperous casinos of their own, Indiana could experience a detrimental plummet in revenue. Even so, it seems to be a risk many Hoosiers are willing to take.

In a sense, everyone gambles, hoping to better themselves and find eternal peace, but it has recently come to my attention that, as a society, we are looking for our "happy endings" in all of the wrong places.

Kara Hackett
Life Editor

Although the idea of "Viva Indiana" may seem appealing, it arouses several cultural issues that are yet to be determined by the "god" of all gamers: fate. Upon hearing about the economic conflicts in our state, I began to ponder what would persuade so many people to gamble, knowing that their chances of winning are far less likely than those of losing. It was then that I realized that I do a good deal of gambling myself. Although I do not take extravagant trips to the luxurious casinos, I find myself making casual bets and wagers with fate inadvertently almost every day. In a sense, everyone gambles, hoping to better themselves and find eternal peace, but it has recently come to my attention that, as a society, we are looking for our "happy endings" in all of the wrong places.

Without guidance, we have begun to question the fundamentals of our being, making our entire lives a game of chance. Ignoring the incredible ability of time to work itself out, we continue to plot out every possible consequence of the decisions we make, eliminating our reliance on good, old-fashioned faith and hard work. We have come to expect immediate answers to all of life's questions by taking irrational chances and gambling to somehow greatly improve our standard of living. Our society has become impatient. We think that our lives can be changed with the push of a button or in the blink of an eye. No one is willing to wait for guidance. Instead, we find ourselves constantly meddling with what we believe to be our destinies and second-guessing our beliefs according to the influence of those around us.

We live in a fast-pace society where it seems there is no time for logical choices and prolonged conclusions. In our lack of time, we are constantly making rash decisions without thinking over the consequences of our actions and withholding our trust from anyone who may be able to help us. The truth of the matter is that we are all lost, and most of us do not even realize it. It is time we all slow down and take a look around ourselves, asking where we are and where we are going, as individuals and as a society. Everyone wants to find a short cut to life's jackpot, but perhaps there are no short cuts to the prizes worth having. What people do not realize is that every truly good thing comes from the one activity Americans resent most: hard work. From nurturing a child into a productive adult to farming a crop and having a successful harvest, the only people who are able to fully reap the benefits of their accomplishments are those who are willing to work for what they want and have faith in their decision to do so.

As Indiana state officials are finding out, although relying on gambling may seem like the right choice, it is only a matter of time before the true nature of the irregular industry becomes apparent, throwing a wrench into plans of all who have relied on it and destroying hope and security where it was vilely misplaced. Life is a gamble, and many people are losing big. In order be successful, we must place our bets strategically, eliminating the possibility of failure by willingly putting forth the effort necessary to make our dreams a reality. Are you willing to take the gamble?

Public Displays of Affection:

Where to draw the line

Rules blur as schools address the issue

By Ian Strelec
Writer

Just recently, in Mascoutah, IL, there was a case where an 8th-grade girl named Megan Coulter received two detentions within a matter of minutes of each other for hugging classmates, an act deemed 'inappropriate' by the school's anti-PDA policies.

Before we get into all the separate things wrong with extreme takes on PDA, we'll consider the school's point of view. In cases across the nation, these policies range from strict no-contact-whatsoever rules to ones like Coulter's case. In certain schools, it can be argued that allowing for PDA can actually block the hallways and disrupt other students. But these occurred outside. According to the article at Time Online, the administrator who issued the detentions 'did not return calls seeking comment.'

This type of thing has been going on for years, decades even. One of the major points of contention is where is the boundary line? Many of the zero-tolerance policies are more to eliminate questions of inappropriateriess and misconduct, simply banning physical contact altogether.

The fact is though, that most of human communication is actually nonverbal, relying on touch, eye contact, body language, and such. You can say more with a touch than a thousand words, sometimes. And really, what's wrong with a couple kissing each other goodbye? What's wrong with a hug between friends, two people holding hands? I can see drawing the line at outright make-out sessions in the halls, but seriously folks, the administration should not be held responsible for issues of PDA. It's not their job to police the halls for that too, when they could better spend their time actually teaching.

I can even see their point of view on this one. I mean, if they don't draw the line somewhere, where does it stop? The problem, however, seems to lie in them drawing the line far too early. If they don't allow for physical contact, it seriously removes a lot of the personal aspects of middle school and high school relationships. Being able to touch someone in a comfortable manner reflects a trust, establishes a comfort with people that just isn't quite the same without it.

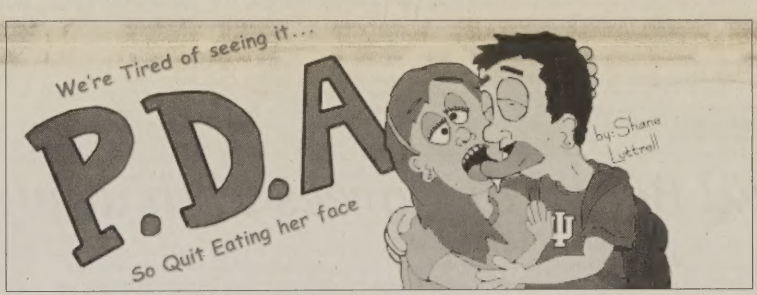
Think about it. How many people in your life do you actually come into physical contact with on a regular basis? It surprised me when I first considered this, but the number is probably smaller than you might immediately expect.

Some examples: a member of your immediate family dies, and you find out during the day. Are your friends allowed to give you a hug and offer comfort? A football player slaps a teammate on the back after a good play; does he get a detention? That question goes both ways: where do we draw the line?

Now granted, some schools, it turns out, our under pressure to keep harassment issues to a minimum. This just adds another layer of complexity to the issue. Because obviously, harassment is going to be against the rules, but what gets deemed as harassment?

So we need to strike a balance and try and keep both the parents and the students happy. I can guarantee that no amount of zero-tolerance policies will actually stop the kids continuing the behavior, they'll just get more discreet about it. It's the same way with about anything; if you try and prevent teenagers from doing it, instead of fighting back, they'll just get sneakier. It's just how things go.

And honestly...what's wrong with a little PDA? There's no law against it, that's for sure, so what happens if it's off school grounds, or after school hours? Why does it have to be different in school? It's not like it's going to be that disruptive in most cases...I know this because I see it pretty regularly. And honestly, we as Spartans have got it pretty light on this one, and for that I'm grateful. But for everyone's sake, maybe consider keeping the PDA down so Homestead doesn't become the source of another issue like Megan Coulter's. That type of school just wouldn't be a fun place to be.



New tax cuts come at a cost

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

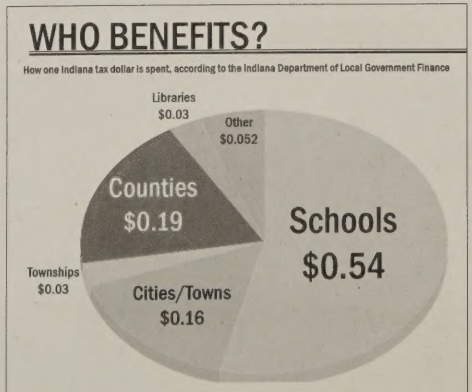
A bi-partisan committee of Indiana lawmakers has recently devised a plan to slash property taxes throughout Indiana by as much as 50 percent. While high school students may not have such lofty responsibilities as of yet, the new tax plans has huge impacts on parents and the entire community. Additionally, as students begin to enter life after mandatory schooling, considerations such as tax levels are important in determining where a student decides to live his or her adult life. To that end, an examination of the current proposal is instructive as it represents a major step toward making Indiana more attractive and livable for residents.

Recently, property tax rates have soared in Indiana by an average of 24 percent. These increased tax rates have caused a great burden on Indiana families trying to keep up with their finances. It is because of this strain that the new tax cuts have been proposed. Upon taking office, Governor Mitch Daniels expressed a desire to see lower tax rates. While the new tax cuts do not exactly mirror his proposal they do achieve the same end result.

Lawmakers must exercise caution, however, as the property tax reduction hinges on an income tax option being exercised by voters. Basically, the state legislature is lowering property taxes, but calling upon voters to voluntarily increase income tax rates. The chairman of the commission that is responsible for the proposal has said that income tax rates would need to increase by 0.6 to 0.7 percent in each county to cover the costs.

There are of course trade-offs with the new plan. Lower property taxes will hopefully make housing more affordable across the state, not only improving living standards for current residents, but also attracting new families to Indiana. Lawmakers must guard against raising income taxes to a level at which the more available housing is made unattainable once again by a decrease in real income due to higher tax rates.

If the state is serious about generating increased tax revenues, a different approach may be advisable. The state looked at increasing sales taxes to seven percent, but that would make Indiana's rate the highest in this region and would therefore have detrimental effects. Instead, economic theory suggests that an increase in tax revenues can be achieved by lowering tax rates for upper incomes and businesses. These tax cuts have the effect of stimulating entrepreneurship and economic growth, expanding the base from which taxes can be collected. Because the lower rates increase the incentive for businesses to expand or start in Indiana, the state would actually increase revenue generated by lowering tax rates.



These theories are supported by statistics and have their basis in the work of economist Arthur Laffer. A prime example of this type of tax cut generating increased revenue can be seen nationally. In 2001, the Bush Administration cut the capital gains tax rates which have since resulted in capital gains revenues that are nearly twice as high as projected without the cuts. Economists projected over 70 billion dollars in tax revenues from capital gains at the previous 20 percent rate, but with a lower fifteen percent rate the revenues have soared to 134 billion dollars.

It is clear that the effort made to lower income taxes shows that lawmakers' hearts are in the right place. They are trying to make Indiana more attractive to families and more livable for current residents. But a decrease in property taxes paid for by increased income taxes may not be the best option. Tax cuts aimed at encouraging business and entrepreneurship in Indiana would increase tax revenues to justify lower property taxes; making Indiana more attractive while promoting business growth and economic stability in our state.

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Life

Reviews

Read our opinions on the latest movies and musics as well as some unique dining facilities in Fort Wayne.
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Friday, November 30, 2007

NHS holds annual induction ceremony

Academic society embraces new faces

Hana Hawash
Writer

Hand-selected by teachers as persons of great academic accomplishments, National Honors Society students not only have high GPA's, but have also proven themselves as motivated individuals in the community. Kicking-off their season with an induction ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 15, and holding their first meeting on Tuesday Dec. 4, committee members and advisor, Steve Clough, anxiously anticipate this year's prospects. The induction is a rewarding and prestigious ceremony for students who have worked very hard to receive good grades and maintain them.

"The induction ceremony takes place in the Homestead auditorium," Mandy Ciecior (12) said. "Speeches are made by Mr. Clough, Mr. Smith and Mrs. Bay. [Also], returning seniors receive a membership card, and there is a slideshow with their baby pictures and current pictures."

Along with series of speeches made by esteemed staff members, the ritual also includes a candlelight ceremony and the reciting of the group pledge. The colored ribbons on the candles used in the induction, which were blue, gold and white, represent leadership, service and character, three key criteria for NHS members. Maintaining outstanding grades throughout their high school career is another important factor that plays into the selection of each member.

Not only do these students excel academically, but also they extend their outstanding behaviors beyond the classroom. The National Honors Society does much to help around the school as well as the community. Students involved are often active members in service projects to benefit the less fortunate. For instance, the "chemo caps" group, led by Hope Baker (12), knits warm, colorful hats for children who are undergoing chemotherapy.

"Our members knit chemo caps for Lutheran Hospital," Dessi Moneva (12) said. "We are hoping to extend the reach of this program [to other hospitals as well.]"

Although National Honors Society membership requires a minimum of five hours of community service, most members reach beyond the standard, taking advantage of the many opportunities available to help the community.

"We provide tutoring in all subjects by having interested members sign up," Moneva said. "[We also] assist teachers with computer technology."

Offering tutors for students of any grade, members proudly participate in one of their biggest service projects of the year. The tutoring program is a great opportunity for the NHS students as well as those they assist. Not only does it provide NHS members with great hands on experience for a future career in public services, but also it helps raise the grade point averages of those who struggle academically.

Looking forward to a new year full of possibilities, NHS excitedly plans for their biggest project of the year, the spring Coffee House. Along with an opportunity to chat with friends and sip warm drinks, the Coffee House is also a great chance to see some of the school's finest talent, both musically and artistically.

"We host the Coffee House which showcases some of the best talent Homestead has to offer."

Ciecior said.

NHS is not only a community service and academic based program, but it is also a great place where students can talk to peers who share their same interests and study habits. Members agree that all of the hard work they put forth throughout the year is well worth the time and effort, considering the many academic and social benefits of their membership. While other activities like Honor Roll and Key Club may look great on college applications and resumes, NHS stands out above all.

"NHS looks extremely good on resumes and college applications," Ciecior said.

PHOTOS BY IAN HAMILTON

Top Right: Principal Rick Smith hands Gagan Chera (12) his NHS certificate. Top Left: NHS patch. Above: Board members and administrators listen as society chair Steve Clough gives induction speech.

Change to daylight-saving time impacts students

By Taylor Thompson
Writer

Daylight-saving time has been a questionable topic in areas that implement it since the concept was first suggested in 1907. In Indiana, daylight-saving time has only been in use for the last two years, but public opinions about it have fluctuated during this time period.

In the summer months, daylight-saving time causes the sun to rise later in the morning and set later in the evening, and as of Nov. 3, when daylight-saving time was removed, this effect is reversed and residents find the sun rising earlier in the morning and setting as early as 5:30 in the afternoon.

> *"As dark as it is in the evening recently, it makes it much harder to do things outside,"*
>
> Steve Lowden
> Sophomore

For the majority of teenagers, the summer is a time for sleeping in and enjoying afternoon hours outside with friends. Daylight-saving time fits into this schedule fairly nicely.

"I usually don't wake up that early in the summer, so I don't really care that daylight-saving time makes the sun rise later," Steve Lowden (10) said. "I would rather have that extra hour added onto the end of the day. This seems to be the common mindset for students. However, some staff members who still have to wake up early in the summer are not as happy about daylight-saving time."

"I don't mind it," Mr. Stephenson, U.S. History teacher, said. "My only complaint is that I have to get up early for my summer job and it is usually dark when I wake up in the mornings. I usually go to bed around 9:30 in the evening during the summer, and it is kind of odd that it's still light out when I'm going to bed."

As big of an impact as daylight-saving time has on the summer, some do not fully appreciate the effects it has on everyday life until it is removed in the fall. Few would argue that more daylight in the morning is not a bad thing, but the sun setting so early is a widespread complaint.

"As dark as it is in the evening recently, it makes it much harder to do things outside," Lowden said.

The time change between summer and fall is also felt by many students who have jobs after school.

"I work at Sycamore Hills Golf Club. It gets dark at 5:30, and we close when it gets dark. We used to get off at 8:00, but the time change makes it so that I cannot work for very long into the evening," Derek Luttrell (10) said.

Daylight-saving time affects everyone in some way, and there seems to be widespread disagreement about its positive and negative effects, but good or bad, Indiana appears to be continuing its use in the years to come.

From the mind of the Mighty Quinn

Feature Column By Erin Quinn
Co-editor in chief

Most families have their traditions for the Thanksgiving holiday, and even though they may vary, almost all are united by a few common threads of the typical American tapestry. Despite different daily schedules built around either lunch or dinner, I would guess that everyone can connect with the distinct tastes and smells of their Turkey Day meal. Some families choose to cherish the extra hours of sleep, while other rise early in order to compete in an early morning running race.

No matter how your family celebrates the annual feast, it is probably relatively routine. I know this is true for my own family. Each year, most of my relatives pile into our comfy suburban home and share quarters for a few days.

Each year, I get tossed a blanket and dilapidated pillow while my elders take advantage of my bed. Each year, the women cook and the men pretend to have something to do.

Each year, the whole clan travels to either Homestead or Huntington to watched the Vik's light up from beyond the arc against me and my fellow basketball teammates. Each year, our company comes from Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Each year, they bring cars and they squeeze them wherever there is room, whether on the street or in the driveway. Each year, we spend time with each other and enjoy tasty food by day. Each year, by night, our stuff gets stolen.

This year, however, was different for a few reasons.

For one thing, the crew that assembled in my home this year was slightly smaller and had a different look to it. My uncle brought a different lady friend, my grandfather and his new wife followed another invitation and the lively family of five of I know as my aunt, uncle and cousins decided to stay in Virginia for the holiday. Another change came in the form of a power yoga video tape. I was bribed to participate in an "intense full-body yoga experience" on Thanksgiving morning. Additionally, our basketball team faced a subdued Huntington squad, and almost pulled off an upset in their eerily quite stadium.

Also, my grandparent's Cadillac disappeared.

As far as tradition goes, the "Steak n' Shake" bandits, as I fondly refer to them, have made an appearance each Thanksgiving. Our house must be a primary target location for this band of thieves due to the eclectic array of cars our visitors park on the street. For the past few years, they have scrounged through our cars searching through bags and compartments, but passing on change.

The following night, they come back for more. Last year, they ran off with a bag of Christmas gifts and came back a week later for my stereo. This year, the group somehow took off my sweet, old grandparent's Caddy. And each year, they leave assorted garbage bearing the Steak n' Shake logo in seat pockets and tucked in corners. By now, it is almost part of our family's tradition.

We aren't so different, these bandits and I. We both enjoy delicious food from beneath the black and white striped awning of the S & S food chain. We both live in the same general area – but the cards I was given place me in the upper-class neighborhood, while they call the nearby subsidized housing addition home.

I would understand if they stole the car to sell it off to pay for a heart transplant or save a child's life. In fact, I would be inclined to let them have the vehicle if they needed it that bad. An act caused by desperation can be forgiven. But a blatant theft that resulted in nothing more than a joy ride and a dump site for Steak n' Shake trash is wrong. This time, the good guys won; the police found the car overnight before I had even woken up prepared for a hearty breakfast on Saturday morning.

Next Thanksgiving, my family plans on hosting a stakeout. We'll all bring leftovers out in the bushes and hover around each other telling baby stories. When they come looking for our easy targets next year, we'll be waiting to surprise the thieves with a little stake and shake of our own.

Age limit on Holiday fun?

Feature Column By
Ashley Hockney
News Editor

Distinguished with glitter pens and highlighters, marked with stickers and post-its and labeled with double-digit numbers, students have begun counting down the days until the one event they managed to record in their handbook–winter break. Christmas/ Hanukah/ Kwanza/or plain and simple and politically correct… the holiday season is just around the corner and highly anticipated by the day-to-day students in our school.

Break is equivalent to freedom. It is the rare and cherished weeks in which we possess ample time to ourselves, or more likely, ample time to spend with our friends. For a minimum number of days, students have time off, which means no homework, no teachers and no 6:00 a.m. alarm clock to be thrown blindly against the wall.

Personally, I'm counting down the days until Christmas. The season began when my grandma sent me her annual countdown calendar. Decorated with an angelic nativity scene, it was marked by perforated squares that will ideally be lifted once a day to reveal a chocolaty morsel hidden under various faces; we all know how long that lasted, but that's beside the point.

By the time November rolls around, I'm ready for the holidays. By holidays, I'm talking about the whole nine yards: bells, snow, cookies and Holy Angels singing "Hark," (whatever that means). I'm looking forward to the holiday cheer, the eggnog and the desperate, chaotic and stress-ridden shopping. However, I've reluctantly noticed that I'm one of the few.

In the midst of the most celebrated holidays on earth, somehow we've found a way to complain.

"I have no time to buy gifts."

"What, you want me to pick up eggnog too?"

"Snow, who needs snow, bad driving conditions is what that is."

Yes, these are just some of the common complaints from the fellow holiday goers. The negative attitude has even infiltrated marketing. See forms of scented plug-ins, apparently they relieve all of that nasty holiday stress that comes with giving.

Pardon me, but I thought Scrooge was supposed to be the bad guy, the twisted old man that needed a whopping number of three holy angels to fix his problems. He is supposed to be the minority among a city packed with cheery holiday workers that burst into song at the thought of Christmas.

Instead, this year's holiday music was met with a nation-wide sigh, "Already?!" My friends quickly turn it off, only to be replaced by the ever popular Soldja Boy who is apparently trying to get someone's attention, "YOOOUU."

Besides the classic tunes of December, we've got to spend time with our family- what a shame. I know that dear ol' dad and mum with her video camera are not exactly what you wanted, but maybe they deserve a little bit of time after they spent a month's salary on your new gadgets. Oh yeah, and there's those pesky grandparents. What's with grandma always trying to give you cookies? Doesn't she know you don't eat carbs?

But here's the worst excuse I've heard all year, "The holidays are really made for children." Since when? Why can't I enjoy my break just as much as my younger cousins? The whole idea is exactly the same: gifts, food, family, time off of work/school. It all sounds good to me.

The only difference I can find is in attitude. When we were young, the extra holiday chores (if you call them chores) were met with glee. Putting up the tree meant a family trip to pick out the ideal sapling, a day of cocoa and old mothball scented ornaments overpowered by the odor of pine.

Okay, I might be exaggerating a little bit, but whatever I did as a child was definitely better than the compacted forest-green mass that came out of the box labeled "x-mas tree" and met with complaints and tedious family arguments over who has to hang the lights. I can't speak about the lighting of menorahs, but I am guessing that this event is not intended to be dreaded either.

Here's my problem, plain and simple: I like the holidays. I really didn't think it was that abnormal until I grew up a bit. Apparently, I'm supposed to dread all of those extra activities that I loved as a child.

However, I like being merry for no apparent reason other than the calendar date. I enjoy buying gifts for my friends. Christmas parties, cookies and no school, I like it all.

So please excuse me during the next few weeks, I'm going to enjoy the days leading up to the holidays. If you want to join me, a little company would be nice.

A look at Pavan Rao

Just as top athletes, club leaders and student government representatives are recognized by the student body, so are those rare people that possess exceptional academic abilities. These are the people that we look to when tests, quizzes and homework are passed back. Well known in this area is Pavan Rao, a senior this year and valedictorian competitor. However, there is more to this outstanding student than GPA, a killer SAT score and what you hear in those sneaky little rumors that pass around the school.

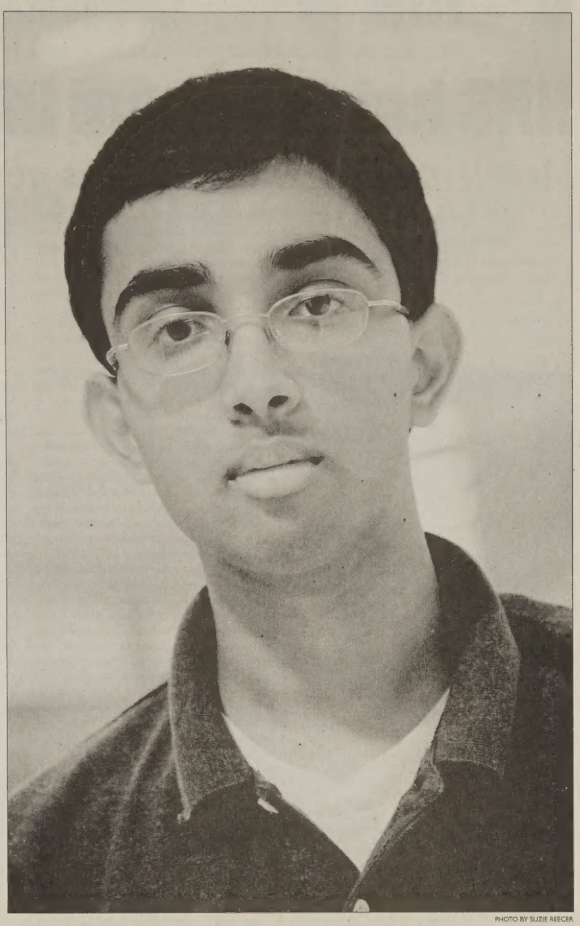

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Spartana: Let's start with how you begin your day, you're a morning person right?

Yeah, I set my alarm for 4:00 [in the morning] each night. I wake up each morning and the first thing I do is shut off the alarm and sleep for another half hour. Then, I wake up at 4:30 and do my morning yoga exercise for a half hour. Then I start my homework. So, if we have a comp essay or a math project I do that until 6:30. Then I take a shower, eat breakfast, get ready and go to school. Then I realize, usually, that I forgot something important and I do that during school.

Spartana: Yoga, does that tie in with your religion at all?

I'm a Hindu. It's a large part of what I do. [Yoga] is a traditional Indian thing, it's closely tied to my religion. I do it because I want to, but I found out about it because I am Hindu.

Spartana: How else has Hinduism shaped your life?

That's an interesting question. It's affected my life quite a bit. The best example of how it shaped my life is how it changed my view of the medical profession. Before, I viewed it as just a way to make a lot of money. I didn't care about the helping people part, the support and care; it's the six-figure salary, the cars [and] the nice house. It was more materialist, the idea that money buys happiness. But, after becoming more involved in my religion, it's really changed how I view it. The money is a factor, but it's not why I'm doing it; it's about finding fulfillment in my life by helping others. I enjoy that. It's a lot more selfless now. Hey, that was one of my college essays.

Spartana: So, you want to go into the medical field?

I want to be a heart surgeon or neurosurgeon. I have no idea why, it just appeals to me. [I'd like to work at a] superspeciality hospital in India. It's a completely free hospital run by totally free efforts from doctors around the world. If I have time, I'd like to dedicate a portion of [my time] every year. Or, when I have time, to go and work there. It's a really interesting way to give back.

Spartana: From what we can tell, it appears that you're pretty focused on academics, do you agree?

Yeah, going to school, academics in general, is a big part of my life. I focus on it a lot, but it's not my entire life. Yeah, I spend time within school trying to learn and master the concepts I have to, but it's not just about… grades or how well I did on a quiz or test. I determine success by how much I learned of the material given, not how well I did on a test. I could do poorly on a test, but if I understand concepts, that's success. But this idea within itself leads to me getting a higher grade, but that's second to me actually learning the material.

Spartana: Where are you looking to go to school?

Do you want a list… it's really long. My number one is Washington University in St. Louis, then Northwestern, University of Michigan, University of Missouri Kansas City, Michigan State University and Case Western. A lot of these schools have an accelerated medical program. So, instead of going go undergraduate school and taking the MCAT and then going to med school, it's a seven-year program. There's no MCAT, and as soon as I'm accepted into the university, I'm in med school. It's geared toward people who know what they want. It's a fast track to get them into their career without taking forever. Usually a doctor is around 25 or 26 [when they get to the end of med school] and then you have to do additional training, a residency and a fellowship. My dad was 33 when he started working. With this, there's still specialization, but I am getting out of med school by 22 or 24. It takes off around one or two years.

Spartana: Do you feel defined by your academic success?

Yeah, a lot of people don't really know me that well, but my… closer friends know me more than just how well I do in school. A lot of people don't have the liberty of getting to know me, it's just what they hear about me and they hear I do well in school. It's not like I worry about it. If they want to know me, they'll talk to me, that's what I'd do. But other than that, it doesn't bother me too much, it's inevitable.

Spartana: How do you wish people saw you?

That's a good question. I do a lot of self-evaluation, but it's not geared toward what others think. I'd rather people get to know my hobbies - yoga, golf, table tennis, pool [and] archery.

Spartana: You're into archery?

I do archery… I've started it. Richard, my yoga guru, started it with me. It's basic principal helps with concentration. I have had lessons before winter or whenever he has time we do it. Until I get my bow and arrow, I'm kind of limited to do it whenever he has time. There's a lot of concentration to teach me focus. I know that most of the time, I can't focus on anyone thing for a period of time, that's why I do archery. I do a lot of things beside schoolwork in my day. This is what I do in my spare time. I don't lock myself in my room and study for eight hours straight.

Spartana: Last, but not least, what's your real name?

I probably can't spell it correctly; it's a bad idea to write that down.

Technology minimizes paper demand

Students begin to rely more and more on electronics for information

Derek Luttrell
Writer

From Gutenberg's invention of the printing press that birthed the art of newspaper publishing, to CNN introducing the world's first around the clock news coverage 27 years ago, it seems as if present day technology has altered the need and purpose of the so-called "old school" news reporting.

"I can't watch the news [on T.V.] anymore because of how depressing it is," Sam Chapman (11) said. "It seems like all they talk about are the bad things that happen."

> *"Buying newspapers almost seems pointless when all you have to do is log on to the Internet, and everything that is in the paper can be found on the homepage."*
>
> **Adam Durkes**
> Sophomore

According to stateofthenewsmedia.org, in 2003, the ratings of cable news dropped a drastic five million viewers; coincidentally the same year that Comcast introduced its High Speed Internet service.

"The Internet is faster and it's easier to just click on what you want to read, rather than wait for the story to come up on the news or to search for it in the [news] paper," Ryan Hosler (10) said.

Although the idea of Internet connectivity for cell phones was established nearly ten years ago, it surprisingly hasn't had much of an impact on replacing the daily paper or 6 o'clock news.

"Internet for cell phones usually costs a lot extra, and I really only use the computer for talking with friends or for homework," Sam Sirois (10) said. "[So], for me, I still rely on the [T.V.] news and front pages of newspapers to see what the latest news is."

However, not all students decide to stay up with the latest trends in technology.

"I still watch the news on T.V. because it goes into better detail and the situation is explained better, and it is easier to understand what is truly happening," Sohail Emamian (10) said.

According to Nielson/Netratings, over 20 percent of avid newspaper readers have switched their preferences to online-only reading as of 2005, with the leading website being NYTimes.com.

"Buying newspapers almost seems pointless when all you have to do is log on to the Internet, and everything that is in the paper can be found on the homepage," Adam Durkes (10) said.

With nearly every new cell phone on the market being programmed with wireless Internet capabilities, and a global increase of about 186 million new cellular subscribers each year (CNet News), breaking news is merely a touch-tone away. No longer does one have to be at a computer to read about what is going on in the world; they can be alerted of any type of information they please at anytime, anywhere."

"Being able to stay on the Internet wherever I am is pretty cool," Andrew Barney (10) said. "It lets me to still be able talk to all my friends on AIM when I don't have a computer around, and the extra features like sports alerts for my favorite teams are nice."

When it comes down to student opinion, it does seem as if televised and printed news just does not accommodate the adolescent life style. If the statistics continue on their recent downfall, it could very well lead to the destruction of everything ranging from Nancy Grace to the Boston Globe in a matter of only a few years.

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foodreviews

The ACME, where neighbors meet

Grill on State Street is pleasent stop if your in the area

Luke Chase
Editor-In-Chief
★★★☆

Vasundhara Bhargava
Designer
★★★★

Brad Lufkin
Designer
★★★☆

If you are ever down around North Side High School, it will be well worth your while to take the extra couple of minutes and head down State Street to The ACME Bar and Grill and grab a bite to eat in a comfortable relaxed atmosphere.

As we walked into the dimly lit family dining room and seated ourselves, Vasundhara immediately went to the jukebox in our booth in search of some ambient music, only to find that it would not play. We were the only costumers in the dining area, however, it sounded like the bar was hopping. With a sousaphone hanging on the wall and a large mural of a non-descript baseball park as well as various paintings and knickknacks, it was a very comfortable place to informally enjoy the company of one's friends.

With the standard assortment of Coca-Cola products and a waitress that was well timed to our pace, we all soon settled on our meals.

Vasundhara ordered a grilled cheese sandwich, standard sized bread and came with a stack of four or five sandwich pickles on the side. She was not a fan of pickles, but the sandwich was so good that she recommends her mother take lessons from the employees of ACME Bar and Grill.

Luke ordered the Pork Fritter and a side of onion rings. With a fritter three times the size of the bun it was a well-proportioned meal and when he added the basket of onion rings it became a feast. The generosly-sized fritter was a valid $9.99 (keep in mind it came with fries). The Onion rings $3.99. After the meal there was still enough room left over for dessert. While they typically carry an array of pies, the only flavor they had left was pecan. With a generous helping of whipped cream, it was the best piece of pecan pie he had ever tasted, not runny but also not too sticky.

PHOTO BY BRAD LUFKIN

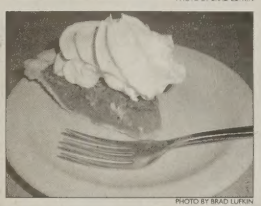

PHOTO BY BRAD LUFKIN

Brad only wanted a side of fries, and the waitress was kind enough to tell us to upgrade Luke's meal to a "basket" and it would come with enough fries for Brad and be cheaper.

The service was good, our waitress was a little slow bringing the check and even slower picking them up, but everything else was just fine. The atmosphere is unique and inviting.

Not quite worth the drive just for the food but if you are on that side of town, stop in for a quick bite to eat, we guarantee you won't be disappointed.

PHOTO BY BRAD LUFKIN

Double Dragon is double trouble

Unlean facility and bland food leaves bad impression

Luke Chase
Editor-In-Chief
★☆☆☆

Vasundhara Bhargava
Designer
★☆☆☆

Margaret Distler
Design Editor
★☆☆☆

A block down from the well-known Cindy's Diner and nestled between Midtown Condominiums and an alleyway lies the Double Dragon, a little known, and less thought of, Chinese food restaurant.

When you walk in, your eyes are immediately drawn to the dingy red seats and the well-worn floor. We decided on takeout so Margaret was in line behind five or so other costumers. To the left is a menu board with updates written in by hand and some items, which are no longer carried, scribbled out hastily in pen.

The cashier who took the order was not only working with the costumers, but also fielded a few phoned-in orders and patiently awaited our request as we tried to collaborate via telephone.

About twenty minutes later, Margaret had enough food to fill four or five separate people's orders.

Along the way home we all were reminded why we wear seatbelts as Vasundhara's Kung Pao Chicken, rice and hot and sour soup was catapulted all over the passenger side of Margaret's minivan after a quick stop. Later in the school parking lot we cleaned it out and swept enough rice out onto the parking lot to feed a small country, or so it seemed.

PHOTO BY LUKE CHASE

The egg rolls were pretty standard, a little chewy, nothing to write home about. In fact they became tough to swallow after the first few bites.

The crab rangoon however was wonderful, the stuffing was creamy and the shells crispy. This may be the only reason to stop into Double Dragon.

The hot and sour soup had no real flavor and was thick with a disturbing texture.

As we moved on to the main courses we had left, we found only disappointment deceived by false first impressions.

The sesame chicken was pretty standard for the first few bites, and then it became tough to swallow. The flavor was bland and the texture of the meat could only be called chewy.

The chicken fried rice was pretty standard as well and left a disappointed audience. It had a unique flavor which was hard to peg and left a slight, unfavorable aftertaste.

The Kung Pao Chicken, well that's hard to say, as we really did end up leaving that one for the birds.

To top off the meal, we had the Chinese-American food staple: fortune cookies. However, this eatery managed to even fall short when it came to the pre-packaged after dinner treat as two of the four cookies had no fortune. A bad omen, perhaps, or maybe it was a just ending to an unsatisfying meal.

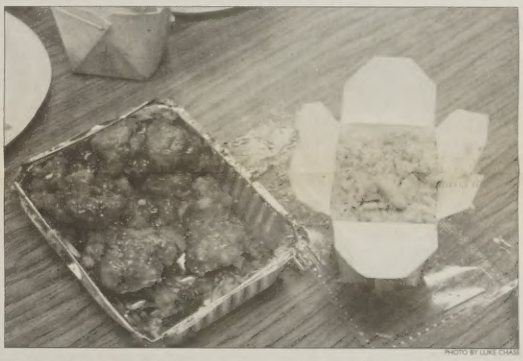

PHOTO BY LUKE CHASE

filmreview by Haley Zimmerman

Beowulf

★★½☆

Based on the epic poem for which it was named, Beowulf is an action-packed beast of a movie. The original piece has been translated into an easy-to-understand, yet possibly over-simplified, version of the story by popular sci-fi writers, Neil Gaiman and Roger Avary.

The plotline is rather easy to follow; several centuries ago, a monster, named Grendel, terrorized a village in Denmark, murdering and feasting upon the townspeople. Because of this mass of death and destruction, the warrior, Beowulf, has come to kill Grendel for the fame and fortune it will bring him. After the beast is slayed, its mother, voiced by Angelina Jolie, is a bit upset and takes her turn ravaging the town.

The animation is the main focus in this movie; what they were able to do with it is just plain cool. The animators were able to get the images of the actors and actresses transcribed almost perfectly into cartoon-like images, which brings up the question of whether or not real people are even necessary to make movies anymore.

PHOTO WWW.IMDB.COM

The king of the land, Hrothgar, Anthony Hopkins, does a great job playing a grumpy, gluttonous old man. His wife, Wealthow, is played by Robin Wright Penn, who still looks exactly as she did when she played "Jen-nay" in Forrest Gump.

Although the script is intriguing and sporadically catches your attention, the action is probably the only thing that is going to firmly grasp your interest with Beowulf incessantly barking in a harsh, slurry English accent about how awesome he is.

Do not bother dishing out the dough for this movie unless you're going to see it in 3-D. It is well worth the $10.50 if you are interested in seeing 300-style violence with various dismemberments, bodily fluids and weapons popping out at you.

musicreviews

Radiohead
In Rainbows
by Greg Kyes-Myland

★★★☆

It's time for Radiohead fans to rejoice… sort of. The famed modern rock group from England is back with their first release since 2003, but the music isn't all that's new with the band's latest album, In Rainbows. The band has received critical acclaim not for their new selection of musical works, but for their completely original business design.

The band's latest album was released only through a digital format, and was accompanied by the slogan, "Pay what you want." Yep, that's right, pay any price you see fit, and $0 is perfectly acceptable. The band says this is a sort of experiment that they've wanted to try out. On the first day of its release, 1.2 million copies of In Rainbows sold as digital downloads. However, the band has not released any official sales figures for the album.

But what about the music? Yes, that oh so essential part of a rock album. There is no denying the fact that the actual musical content of the album has been overlooked for the creative distribution. Simply put: it's good. Of course, no one would expect Radiohead to release anything less than satisfactory, but In Rainbows does not really display any sort of extraordinary component that allows it to be rivaled with Radiohead's "great" albums. Listeners can expect an album basically along the same lines of the 2003 release, Hail to the Thief with solid intertwining of the bands most experimental album, Kid A (2000) as well as hints of the more straight forward rock release OK Computer (1997). Don't get me wrong; In Rainbows is in no way a disappointment. Chances are, it's the kind of album that will go down as a solid Radiohead album that gets better with every listen. Like I said, it's good. And hey, it's even better when you're paying your own price.

Roger Clyne and The Peacemakers
"No More Beautiful World"
by Brad Lufkin

★★★½

Roger Clyne and The Peacemakers, formerly known as The Refreshments, is the only independent band ever to have five straight albums debut in the Top Ten of the Billboard Internet Sales chart. Considering that CDs will soon be completely obsolete, that is quite impressive.

Their newest album, "No More Beautiful World," moves the band's sound forward. It is a combination of rock, a little mariachi, reggae and I hate to say it, but country is also thrown into the mix, spicing it up. Upon first hearing the CD, it may seem that every song sounds the same, but once you listen more carefully, the nuances and charm of each individual song become more apparent. For example, in "Goon Squad," Clyne subtly assails certain political figures by criticizing their policies. "Too many generals stabbin' flags in a foreign shore / New season, new reason, same ol' war," is one portion of the lyrics that well illustrate his liberal inspiration.

Furthermore, the band vocalizes their social views as well as their political views, making it known that they are one of the most environmentally friendly bands to ever exist. The band prints everything, including their CD case, on 100% recycled paper. They also donate 1% of their sales to support environment relief funds. In fact, many of Clyne's meaningful lyrics are meant to urge environmental reform.

PHOTO AMAZON.COM

Unfortunately, however, his vision of what the earth should be is often eclipsed by human thoughtlessness.

With the purchase of the CD, you also receive an eighty minute DVD that is actually worth watching. It includes a live version of "Hourglass" that is absolutely amazing. Thus, "No More Beautiful World" is an upbeat album that carries listeners far away to the tranquil beaches of Mexico. It has such variety of songs and clever choice of lyrics that you will learn something new each time you listen.

DANCING to the oldies

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

By Arpita Bhardwaj
Writer

Huge dresses, old songs, and students dancing were what the Sophomore Parking Lot Dance Party consisted of. The "Rub Club" hosted the old-style outdoor party. The term "Rub" is actually an old term for dance, which fits because the music and clothing was all oldies. The dance was held in the sophomore parking lot, hence the name, and was for anybody who needed time to just relax. The stress of school can get some down, and a party always makes life more fun.

"Well sometimes there's times in ever person's life, male or female, where they just say to themselves, 'Screw school, I just want to dance to oldies in a high school parking lot.' And by golly, that's what happened." Stephanie Zimmerman (11) said. Some students do need a break from the stress of school, and a dance party was a good way to relieve that stress. The party was filled with dancing the way it happened back then.

The beginning of the party turned out a little slow, a few things did not go as planned but the overall turnout, in every aspect, was good.

"At first it was a little slow, we could not get the A-Track to play and someone forgot the record player, but eventually we got it working," Zimmerman (11) said. "I think some people at first were intimidated by the intense speed and rhythmic movements of the dance moves that we were laying down, but eventually they got over it and joined in."

The "rhythmic movements" seemed to appeal to those who attended the party. After getting past the minor problems, the party was more like an actual dance party, with people dancing, and having fun listening to the oldies. Though the number was uncertain before the party, a lot of people did attend, and had a good time.

"I was honestly shocked by the number," Sara Parker (11) said. "I know we told a lot of people but I really did not think most people would be interested in it, especially in the cold."

The weather was not a bad factor to those who joined the party, since there were more people who came than were thought.

The party in the sophomore lot was not only held for sophomores at Homestead, but other classes could come as well. Since it was held in its location, some may wonder if there will be one in the future for more upperclassman or freshman to attend.

"We have talked briefly about it, but there has not been any definite plans. Some people have asked for another though," Parker (11) said, "We haven't made any plans, but if we do have another dance party, it will probably be anyone from Homestead who wants to come can, like it was that Friday."

Though there may be another dance on the way, the members of the "Rub Club" are not completely sure yet. Since more people want another party, it will probably be around warmer temperatures, so more can attend.

"It is a strong possibility." Zimmerman (11) said concerning another dance party in the future.

Since the theme of the dance party was "oldies", it would sound as if the attendees would be older, maybe pertaining to faculty members of Homestead.

"A lot of kids just don't respond positively to the idea of a good old-fashioned rub-down. And we understand this. That is why for the dance party we tried to target an older demographic, particularly those over 40." Zimmerman (11) said.

Not only did students go, but adults attended as well. Overall, the dance party was a hit and another one may be on its way.

PHOTO BY HALEY LAUDALIO

Top: Students enjoy an afternoon dance party in the student parking lot. Left to right: Derek Kinzer (11), Haley Laudalio (11), Colin McCracken (11), Chelsea Hanauer (11), Kendy Osborn (11), and Stephanie Zimmerman (11). **Top Right:** Students force an incoming car to come and join all the good old-fashioned action. Left to right: Alex Defreeuw (11), Haley Laudalio (11), Brock Rohlfing (11), and Kevin Duval (12).

"Well sometimes there's times in ever person's life, male or female, where they just say to themselves, 'Screw school, I just want to dance to oldies in a high school parking lot.' And by golly, that's what happened."

Stephanie Zimmerman (11)
Dance Party Participant

THE SIGNATURE MOVES

NAME: Derek Kinzer (11)
MOVE: the "DK" special
INSPIRATION: This move was passed down with heartfelt sentiment from Derek's mother.

PHOTO BY HALEY LAUDALIO

NAME: Alex Defreeuw (11) and Brian Smeltzer (Campus Life director)
MOVE: "the old-fashioned throwback"
DESCRIPTION: It requires two talented people and a lot of coordination- do not try at home without supervision.

PHOTO BY HALEY LAUDALIO

NAME: Chelsea Hanauer (11)
MOVE: "the Chan-Chan"
INSPIRATION: "I just kind of throw my head back and let the screamin' meemies take over."

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

DANCE PARTY PLAYLIST

1. Rama Lama Ding Dong 2. Riding Along in My Automobile 3. Knock Three Times 4. Big Girls Don't Cry 5. Sherry 6. Do Wah Diddy 7. Oh What a Night 8. Love is All Around 9. The Birds and the Bees 10. Don't Know Much About History 11. Cupid 12. Sugar Sugar 13. Louie Louie 14. Rockin' Robin 15. Save the Last Dance For Me 16. Sunshine Go Away Today 17. Walk Like a Man 18. Twist and Shout 19. Sitting on the Dock of the Bay 20. Stand By Me 21. Under the Boardwalk 22. When a Man Loves a Woman 23. Hit the Road, Jack 24. 500 Miles 25. My Girl 26. Mockingbird 27. Lollipop

PHOTO BY HALEY LAUDALIO

Left: Participants in the dance party get together for a picture before it ends. Top row: Left to right: Kevin Duval (12), Kendy Osborn (11), Becky Price (12), Alex Defreeuw (11), Brianna Blumenherst (9), Amanda Wurst (8), Erica Wurst (10), Jordan Kinzer (9), Stephanie Zimmerman (11), Kylee Bragalone (10), Emily Beam (10). Bottom Row: clockwise from far left: Brock Rohlfing (11), Chelsea Hanauer (11), Haley Laudalio (11), Sara Parker (11), Joe Hanauer (9), and Derek Kinzer (11).

PHOTOS BY MARGARET DISTLER

Left: To spread publicity for the dance party, Chelsea Hanauer (11) has a painted announcement on her car. **Above:** Showing off his moves, Andrew Reiman (12) dances with other students during a mid-afternoon oldies dance session.

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homestead high school
4310 homestead road
fort wayne, indiana 46814

Sports

Overcoming Losses

Girls' basketball looks to improve skill, stage comeback after early losing streak.
Story on page 4B.

Friday, November 30, 2007

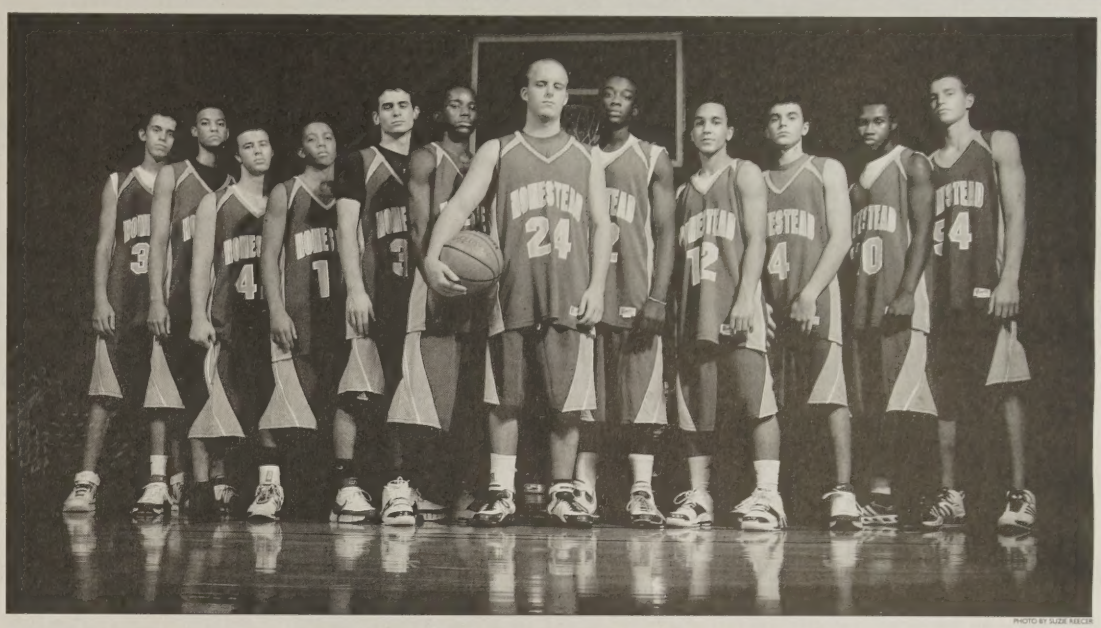


PHOTO BY SUZIE KEECH

The varsity basketball team is led by seniors Jacob Weide, Logan Bultemeier, David Osborn, and Chase Sanders. The fourth-ranked team in the NHC is looking to win the conference championship.

Young, inexperienced basketball team sets high goals for season with new strategy

STILL determined

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

'Not enough experience' or 'too young' are several excuses critics will give any team that is made up of mostly underclassmen. The boys varsity basketball team is just that, with only four seniors, three juniors and five sophomores. Only Jacob Weide (12) and Logan Bultemeir (12) saw action from last years' team. However, youth is not automatically a bad thing. Teams have overcome the inexperience card to compete for championships. Most of the time, it does not happen right away, it usually takes a couple games to get things clicking.

The new Spartan starting five consists of Weide, Bultemeir, Chase Sanders (12), David Osborn (12) and Chris Ray (11), most of which came off the bench last year.

"Having only two players back who played a lot from last year definitely gives us a new look," Chris Johnson, basketball coach, said. "We are definitely going to have to work on a lot of things this year."

The youth of the team will be coming off the bench with Mike Bradley (11), Rodney Thompson (11), Al Jennings (10), Andy Phillippe (10), Jay Curry (10), Desmon Powers (10) and Parker Ahee (10).

Because of the youth and athleticism of this team, the Spartans are looking to play with a brand new style compared to teams from the past. Instead of the usual slow-down pace that Spartan teams have shown, this team wants to pick up the pace against opponents and get up and down the floor with ease. One could even say that this team has a new-school game style compared to the old-school ways of past teams.

Everyone on the team is capable of shooting the outside shot, which allows the Spartans to open up their offensive game plan and create mismatches against many of their opponents.

A big question for the team is whether the younger players can adapt to the faster and stronger gameplay of the varsity level. Ahee, Curry, Phillippe, and Powers played on the Freshman team, while Bradley, Jennings, Ray, and Thompson suited up for the Junior Varsity team last year. The team seems optimistic about adapting to the new pace of play.

The expectations for this young team, however, have remained the same as in previous seasons.

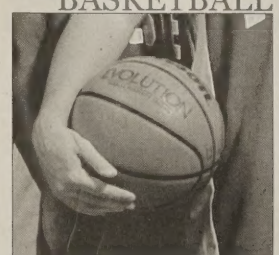
"We still expect to win conference this year," Osborn said. "We also want to do well in sectionals."

The Spartans first showcase was a scrimmage game against Whitko on Nov. 17. Ray led all scorers with 20 points and was helped by Jennings who scored nine points, all from behind the arc. The team struggled to keep out of foul trouble throughout most of the game but was able to pull out a 64-52 victory over the Wildcats.

Due to press deadlines, stats and results from the game against Harding, were not available. Johnson expected Harding to shoot the ball very well and wanted to control the tempo to a comfortable pace against the Hawks.

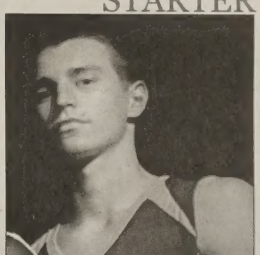
Picked to place fourth in the Northeast Hoosier Conference, the Spartans are looking to prove critics wrong. They expect to win the NHC, regardless of the youth and inexperience of the team.

BASKETBALL



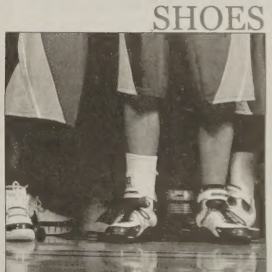
The team uses a Wilson Evolution ball for practice and for games. The ball is a regulation men's size basketball. The Indiana High School Athletic Association requires schools to use the Evolution ball in games for consistency.

STARTER



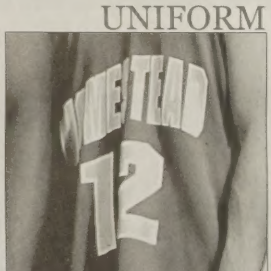
Jacob Weide (12) is one of two starters who played a lot last year and one of four seniors on the team. The starting line-up includes Weide, Logan Bultemeier (12), Chase Sanders (12), David Osborn (12), and Chris Ray (11).

SHOES



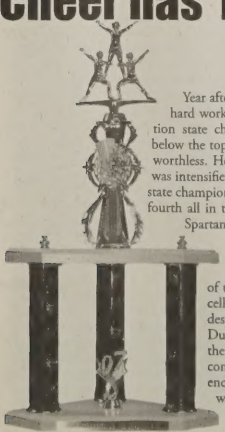
Most players have different pairs of shoes. Although some may have the same game shoes, the only requirement is that they must be white with royal blue. The boys wear different shoes to practice than to games.

UNIFORM



The lowest uniform number for this season is 4 and the highest is 54. Seniors get first choice for uniform numbers, followed by juniors and sophomores. Usually, a player keeps the same number each year he plays varsity.

Cheer has 'flawless' state performance, captures fourth



By Kalyn Jorgensen
Writer

Year after year, the Spartans exert all of their hard work toward the Indiana Cheer Association state championship. Continuously placing below the top five, the squads felt their effort was worthless. However, this year the squad's morale was intensified, which helped them succeed at the state championship. Defeating Carmel and placing fourth all in the same day was the best thing the Spartans could ask for.

With tryouts beginning in April and the season ending around October, the squad has devoted much of their time to the team. The team excelled in many of their competitions, despite injuries and other complications. During the competitions at the start of the season, at least one person couldn't compete due to injuries. Toward the end of the season, a few team members were not eligible to participate due to personal incidents. Although squad members were not always present, the Spartans continued to do well.

As the team headed to the Indiana Cheer Association state championship, they had a little confidence because they had just placed second in the NHC. The squad performed to the best of their ability and hoped to be outstanding.

"After we finished performing and saw our coach jumping up and down and cheering for us we knew we did really well," Teri Grimes (12) said. "After we got a chance to go talk to our parents about how everything looked, all of them told us our performance was flawless."

The Spartans waited until all of the teams had performed to find out where they placed. Unlike most competitions, the state competition awards begin by reading participant names in each division before announcing the top five teams.

"When our coach told us they had announced all but five teams, we knew we at least made the top five; everyone started screaming and getting excited," Grimes said.

The squad waited to hear their name for fifth place, but instead Carmel was announced.

"Beating Carmel was just icing on the cake. They are a really strong squad and after seeing their flawless routine it felt so good to place higher than them," Kelsey Amstutz (11) said.

Not only did the Spartans conquer Carmel, they beat them by twenty points. Carmel places in the top three every year, so beating them was an exhilarating moment for the squad.

With the fall cheerleading season ending, many members had to decide whether or not to participate in the winter season. Krisanne Diss, the head varsity coach, decided to not coach for the winter. Along with Diss, none of the senior cheerleaders are taking part in the winter season. Due to the lack of people trying out for the squads, the freshman squad has been eliminated. Freshman now only have the option of partaking on the junior varsity or varsity squad. Even though the head coach will be gone, with no seniors, and no freshman squad, the Spartans hope to do as well as they did during the fall season.

"With so many seniors on the squad during the football season and everyone else stepping up their performance, we were really happy to end the season with a great routine," Grimes said.

STATE PLACINGS

Varsity 4A Divison

1st - Hamilton Southeastern
2nd - Pendleton Heights
3rd - Floyd Central
4th - Homestead
5th - Carmel

Swimmers strive for early success

Miles upon miles of swimming, dry-land training prepare team for season

By Brian Graham
Business Manager

Coming off of top-five finishes at last year's state competition, the Spartan swimmers have opened the season with the same success as past years. Part of the team traveled to East Noble Tuesday, Nov. 20 to take on the Knights at the Cole Center Family YMCA, coming out victorious.

Tuesday's victory however was not the first action that the team had seen for the year, competing the previous Saturday in the team's third annual Intersquad meet. The meet has become a Thanksgiving weekend tradition that always includes fierce competition and a celebratory breakfast to follow.

Many walked into Saturday's meet tired and sore from the nine miles of swimming and 45 minutes of intense dry-land training, but the work of the previous day did not seem to hinder the skills of the school's talented swimmers. The meet began with times within two seconds of the school record in the Girl's 200 Medley Relay, and did not lack excitement from that point on.

"Intersquad went well; it was a lot of fun to race each other and there were good races in almost every event," Kristen Witham (12) said. "It really showed our depth and versatility as a team. We are really excited for the upcoming meets and are excited to swim fast."

The meet was very close throughout its entirety, with the outcome coming down to the final event. With first and third place finishes by the Gold men in the 400 Freestyle Relay, the Gold team pulled out the two point win over the Royal team, causing Royal's swimmers to be stuck as the servers of the breakfast to follow.

"We got a chance to see how well we're performing so far and it was our first competitive meet as a team," Emily Aeschliman (12) said.

The swimmers, however, have a full schedule of competition to come starting tomorrow by traveling to compete in the Second Annual Hall of Fame Classic at Brownsburg High School, west of Indianapolis.

The team returns to defend their titles of Girls Team Champion, Boys Team Champion and Combined Team Champion from last year's event. The meet will pit the top teams from throughout the state in a one day Prelim-Finals meet with the outcome likely to be decided by a team's depth and desire.

"The meet was fast," Ethan Radalia (12) said after Saturday's intersquad battle. "Last years state swimmers performed as expected and looking at under classmen I predict our teams depth is about to get a lot deeper." Radalia hopes this newfound depth and continued performance will provide the needed spark to bring back the titles from tomorrow's meet.

The team has high hopes for the year, with many goals aimed for February's state tournament series. Both Boy's and Girl's teams will again enter into the South Side Sectional where they wish to continue the dominance they have showed in the Homestead Sectional since 2005.

"This year will be a year of accomplishments," Anderson Whipp (11) said. "The team has great chemistry which creates competitive camaraderie, and I believe that will be the driving force that takes us through the year."

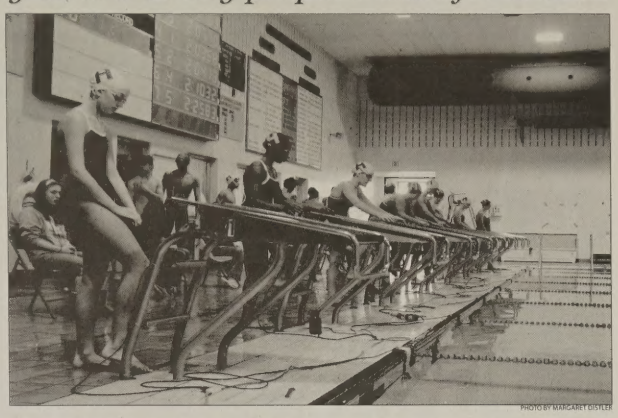


PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Above: From left - Emily Aeschliman (12), Malika Harris (9), Hayden O'Shaughnessy (11) and teammates prepare for the start of their race at the Intersquad meet at the Summit Natatorium on Nov. 24. The girl's swim caps designate which team they were assigned to for the Intersquad meet. Only a few short races later, the winning team was determined and the opposing squad had to face their fate: serving the victors breakfast.

Left: Ethan Radalia (12) moves swiftly through the water as he swims the 100 breaststroke as the Royal and Gold teams competed against each other at the Intersquad meet.

INTERSQUAD: THE ANNUAL BATTLE BETWEEN ROYAL & GOLD

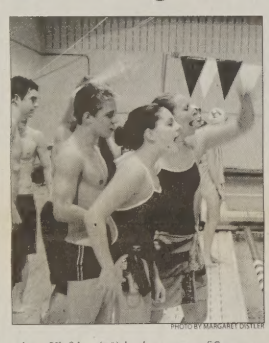


PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

Alexis Klefeker (12) leads a group of Spartan swimmers in cheering on their teammates.

WHO: All of the members of the Homestead swim team are divided in two teams:

ROYAL & GOLD

WHAT: Swimmers compete against one another as if it is an official meet. the event is complete with timers, officials, true scoring

WHEN: The Saturday after Thanksgiving, this year the meet was held on Nov. 24th

WHERE: Summit Natatorium

WHY: To help the team bond, to build moral and excitement for the rest of the season

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

Morgan House (11), Emily Haiffley (12), and MacKenzie Bagan (11) celebrate following the conclusion of an event.

Professional teams people love to loathe

New England's pro teams seem to have a lot going against them, yet they win successively

By Nick Arnold
Sports Editor

In every league across the country, there exists a consistently superior team. Somehow able to rise to the top, time and time again, these teams' fan bases become sacrilegious. But for the remaining fans of other teams, the godlike status of legendary teams becomes an annoyance.

The majority of sports fans become tired, witnessing the same group of individuals claim championship after championship. Whether in the professional or amateur field, a dominant team in sports is a necessary evil. Without them, we would have no one to hate, or no one to love. But when certain teams gain excessive amounts of influence in a sport, fans become appalled for valid reasons.

Ask any sports fan about a dominant team and their answer will more than likely involve some New England organization. Maybe someone shares a belief by hundreds of thousands around the country that the New England Patriots are too dominant. Or maybe they believe that the New York Yankees have an unfair advantage economically in Major League Baseball. For whatever the reason, or whoever the team, the situation funnels down to the same concept. New England's professional sports teams represent an undue dominance in athletics.

Let's face it, the majority of sports fans do not reside in New England itself. Only a miniscule five percent of the total United States population calls New England home. Three of the past six Super Bowls have gone to a team that embraces its New England stature, the Patriots. Though this dominance is a somewhat recent phenomenon, the Patriots have continually broken the hearts of fans around the country. But what is so exciting about witnessing a dominant team win again and again? Nothing, nothing at all.

CARTOON BY SHANE LUTTRELL

As if the recent New England domination in football does not serve enough grief to the majority of sports fans, one only needs to look towards baseball for further disappointment. The Boston Red Sox, one of the oldest teams in Major League Baseball, have again won professional baseball's pinnacle of achievement.

Yes, the Red Sox had that underdog title working in their advantage prior to their 2004 erasure of the infamous "Curse of the Bambino." The overcame the odds and superstitions, and for a fleeting second made the world believe that New England athletics are not all that evil.

Then they won again, sweeping the Colorado Rockies in this year's series. On top of being boring, the Red Sox rout was just depressing. Here was a Colorado team, less than two decades old, built from the ground up by a new general manager, Dan O'Dowd.

Sitting in O'Dowd's office this June, I perceived a great sense of professionalism that surrounded the Rockies franchise. The team was relatively new, they had struggled, and now they had risen to the center stage of major league baseball. They had no one dominating player, they were in the purest sense a team. Dressed in a polo shirt and slacks, O'Dowd was approachable. His true passion and knowledge of baseball manifested themselves in his conversation.

Unlike their New England counterparts, including the excessively endowed Yankees, the Rockies have very little money to spare when it comes to talent. The average Major League Baseball team spends 48.9% of revenue on its players. The Rockies spend 28.4%. Yet, even with such small resources, other teams such as the Rockies have fan bases just as strong, if not stronger than those of New England teams. The Rockies' season-opening sellout crowd of eighty-thousand people remains the largest single game attendance in Major League Baseball.

But sadly again this year, a talented and new team took on one of the relics of athletics. They lost in a sorry fashion, like the countless of others who have suffered the same fate.

Like the general trend in our nation's sports history, the grossly endowed teams of New England continue to trample upon the Cinderella teams that fall victim to their prowess. Perhaps the next time we even consider rooting for a sports team from the supposed "Cradle of our nation," we must ask ourselves a vital question. When is enough truly enough?

Six games in: hockey climbs in local ranks

By Andrew Weiss
Writer

Most people hate moving days, but for the hockey team, they cannot get much sweeter. The team has gone from last place in their sixth game in the season and has moved up one spot each week. Now the team is sitting in second, but has ground to make up on first place North Side.

"Our first few weeks were not too great, but lately we have really steeped it up," Kevin Kelley (10) said. "I think if we continue to progress we will have a good chance [at beating first place North Side]."

The team was selected in the late summer and Coach Jim Glick had to cut six players, which is very rare due to the lack of players who attend each school. Although cuts were made, the team is made up of nine new players, which is nearly half of the team. Also, last year's starting goaltender, Mike Donnell (12), decided to become a full-time skater this year. Surprisingly, Donnell is tied for second place in goals with eight in eight total games.

"Mike is naturally talented at hockey, he has always skated out when [Jon Lain] played goalie," Kelley said. "He's doing really well for his first full year."

One of the most important parts in the team's success has been the leadership from forwards and team captains Will Glick, who attends Blackhawk Christian High School, Donnell (12) and Linden Kelley (12).

"Being a captain means that you have to show that you're not going to give up when the team is down," Kelley said. "The better you lead by example the more likely the team will show hard when we are down, especially with the young team we have."

Just like any sport, there is a lot to learn for the newcomers on the hockey team. The only problem is that there are not a lot of opportunities for the players to learn the systems. The team practices every Monday and every other Tuesday, which is very little compared to other high school sports that practice almost everyday.

"Since hockey is a club sport and ice time is so expensive, we don't get the opportunities to practice everyday like football and basketball teams do," Kelley said. "The most important thing is for the players to be committed and focused at practice and play other sports or training outside of practice."

To make up for the lack of ice, nine of the 20 players on the team play on Fort Wayne High School All-Star teams, too. Along with the extra ice-time with the All-Star teams, the team plays "crossover" games against other Indiana High School hockey teams about one to two weekends a month. So far, the team is off to a winning start, beating Lawrence, Cathedral-Bishop Chatard and Hamilton Southeastern's B team. The only "crossover" loss came to high school hockey powerhouse Hamilton Southeastern's A team.

"[Crossover games] have been really fun," Sean Palmer (11) said. "It's fun playing schools from across the state, because it can be challenging."

The most important wins to all high school hockey teams are winning league games. The six-team Fort Wayne Hockey League consists of Northrop, New Haven, North Side, Carroll, Snider and Homestead. In league games, the team is unbeaten in four straight league games winning three and tying one.

"The season has been going great; we had a slow start in October, but when November came things seemed to start clicking," Palmer said.

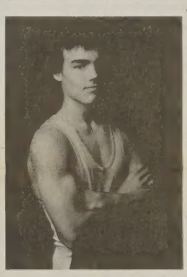
Putting the puck in the net has been no problem for the team this year. The team is second in goals allowed in all of Fort Wayne teams with forty-five goals allowed. One would think this would be because the team had just two returning Defensemen.

"We don't have much high school experience on defense, but we still have a lot of talent," Ethan Bragalone (9) said.

The team has high expectations going for the rest of the year despite the slow start.

"This year the team is a lot different," Kelley said. "I would say a good goal for us is to finish is the top three and if week keep adding to our recent success we have a good chance of accomplish that goal."

PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER



Wrestlers face setbacks

Injuries, inexperience plague team's first match

By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

The wrestling team won its first meet Tuesday, Nov. 27 against DeKalb, stifled with injuries. Several varsity wrestlers are injured and are unsure whether they will wrestle this year. Justin Wight (12), who has made state for his weight class two years in a row, is bothered by a hurt knee.

"I would say it s a good chance for the younger wrestlers who normally wouldn't wrestle varsity, have a chance to wrestle varsity," Kyle Luithly (11) said. "We are young but we have a lot of energy, and look to compete with everyone and pull out a few wins."

> *"We are young, but we have a lot of energy, and look to compete with everyone and pull out a few wins."*
>
> **Kyle Luithly (11)**
> Varsity Wrestler

The wrestling team won eight out of the fourteen weight classes, and won he dual match 37-21. Four freshmen started on the varsity line up. Brad Rumancik (9) lost 10-0 in the 119 weight class. He was followed by Josh Kryder (9) who lost 13-6 in the 125 weight class and Austin Wilburn (9), who lost by a fall in the 140 weight class. However, returning seniors Justin Wight and Jason Sampson (12) won their matches.

"Taking in young guys does not lower our standards." Randy Pursley, wrestling coach, said. "We are lacking in mat time and mat experience, but we will move people around in dual, head-to-head, matches to get better."

Andrew Fahlsing (12) has been ranked fifth in state in the 145 weight class, off of preseason play. In his final year of high school wrestling, Fahlsing is having surgery for torn cartilage in his knee. Tucker Smith (10) is also out for the majority of this season due to a fractured back. Finally, Luithly is out with torn ligaments in his thumb for eight to twelve weeks.

"All three of us are hoping to return for the end of the season," Luithly said. "Sectionals are like the third week of January, and that's when we are all looking to return."

All three of these injured varsity wrestlers are hoping to recover in time for the post season. However, another factor the team must over come is the loss of varsity wrestler, Shane Ruckel (12). In the meantime, several younger wrestlers must take their positions on varsity and try to get the team as many wins as possible. This experience may help the team next year as they will have experience with the top wrestlers.

"We are really looking for some of the sophomore and freshmen to step up; particularly, Frank Galilei (10), Ben Schreider (10), Austin Wilburn (9) and Josh Kryder (9)," Luithly said.

Although active, Wight has been wrestling with a hurt knee. As the team's most successful individual wrestler, he went for the last two seasons near undefeated until the first rounds of state. Wight will continue to wrestle and is currently ranked 11th in state, by preseason wrestling.

Missing four of their varsity wrestlers, this adjusted lineup of varsity wrestlers will be tested again tomorrow at the DeKalb tourney, and the two meets next week at Norwell and Plymouth.

Top: Last season's semi-state qualifiers return for another round. Clockwise from back left: Jason Simpson (12) Trent Wilburn (12), Phil Reiman (12), Andrew Fahlsing (12), Justin Wight (12), and Tucker Smith (10). In descending order, Fausling, Wilburn, and Smith pose.

How do student athletes fit in?	Favorite Cereal?	Favorite place to go on a date?	Favorite toy as a child?	MySpace or Facebook?	Last thing you watched on YouTube?
Kelsey Amstutz (11) **Gymnastics**	Lucky Charms	Picnic in the park	Barbies	Facebook	Shoes
Jay Curry (10) **Basketball**	Reeces' Puffs	Crazy Pinz	Transformers, Yo-yo	Facebook	MJ highlights
Nick Jones (11) **Swimming**	Cheerios	Movies, Restaurant	Buzz Lightyear	Facebook	A guy make a flamethrower out of a water gun
Jena Hamrick (9) **Basketball**	Lucky Charms	The Roller Rink on Disco Night	Big Wheel Bike	Facebook	Crank Dat

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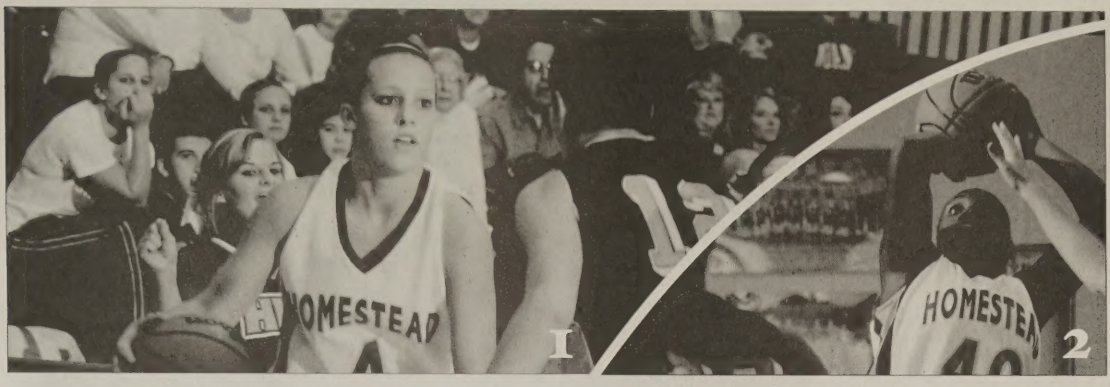


Slowly Coming Together

By Kara Busse
Writer

The Lady Spartan basketball team has started up their season for 2007 with a loss of seniors and non-returning or ineligible key players from last year. Posed with these challenges, the team is giving some roles to the under classmen.

Two of the starting five, Kendra Dyson (10) and Jena Hamrick (9), complete the team out on the court.

"Our team is fairly young an inexperienced as varsity players so everyone needs to really be a part of the team," Rachel Kruse (11) said.

Although Dyson is still one of the youngest of the basketball team, she knows what its like to be the lone freshman because she was in Hamrick's position just last year.

"The girls don't treat me any differently and it's been really easy to get along and play with everyone," Hamrick said.

Thursday, Nov. 15 was the team's debut game against Bishop Dwenger. Following a very intense and close junior varsity game, the girls were ready to play.

It was a battle throughout the entire game. Both teams were playing hard and what seemed to be the best of their ability. When the half time buzzer sounded and many fans left to go grab snacks, the girls were left trailing by only a few points.

The game continued in the second half and when it was over the team had been handed a three point loss.

The next game was on Tuesday, Nov. 20 against the Elmhurst Trojans. The girls were on their home court for the second time, hoping that would encourage a win. Unfortunately for the Lady Spartans, they came up short once more, losing the game 53-62 and putting their record at 0-2.

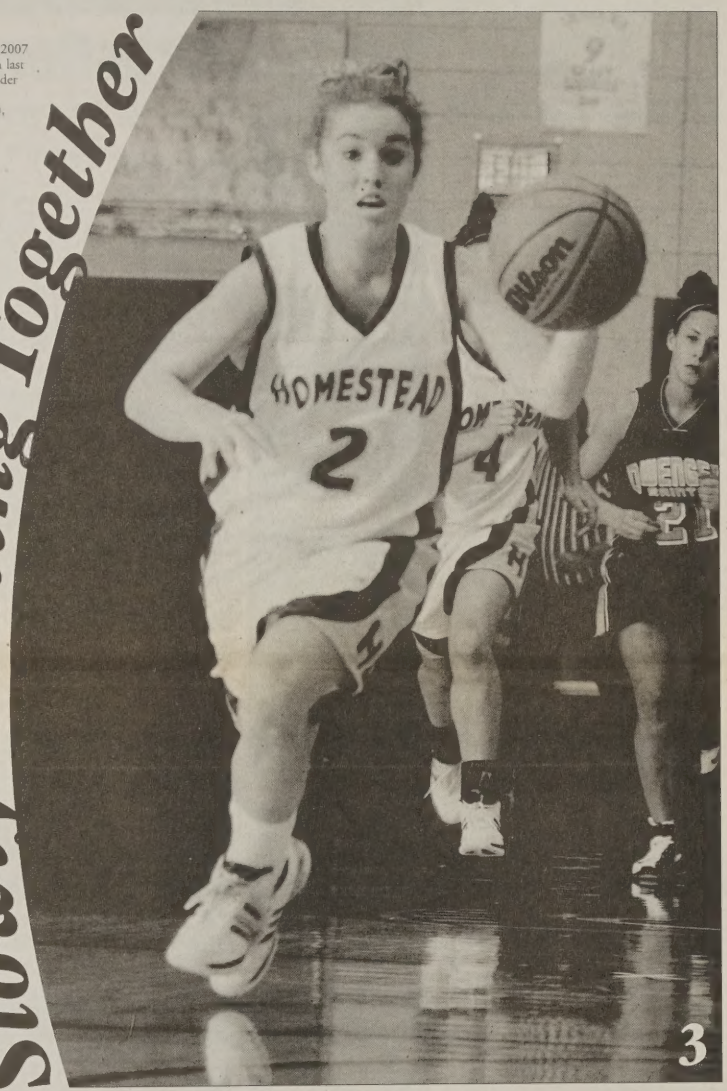
After the day off the team got from Thanksgiving, the girls were ready to go and play another game on "Black Friday" and try to get the goose egg off their record against Huntington North. The girls put up a tough fight throughout the whole game and played extremely hard. They recovered from a 15-2 first quarter deficit with help from the starting guard's soft touches from behind the arc. They led into the fourth quarter, but came up short in the final minute of play. The scoreboard read 59-61 as the team's record dropped to 0-3.

"It was a game we played really hard in," Kruse said. "We were working well as a team and I think it was the best game we've played so far."

Despite the rough start, the girls kept their wits and came out the following Tuesday looking for a win. They hosted North Side, and following 32 minutes of play, walked away with a resounding 62-41 victory.

Although the girls have been positioned seventh out of the eight conference teams, they currently hold the last spot in the rankings.

"We've only been losing by a couple points each game and hopefully we can start staging a comeback and playing with the skill we know we have," Kruse said.



1. Jena Hamerick (9) keeps her eyes on the developing action as she fends off a defender.
2. Terrysha Gordon (10) takes a jump shot.
3. Kendra Dyson (10) breaks away downcourt with fellow guard Hamrick in pursuit.
4. Erin Quinn (12) faces off against rival player in their game against Dwenger.
5. Francesca Schmidt (12) keeps her eyes on the rim during a free throw in hope of a rebound.

{ Photos by Suzie Reecer }

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the Spartana

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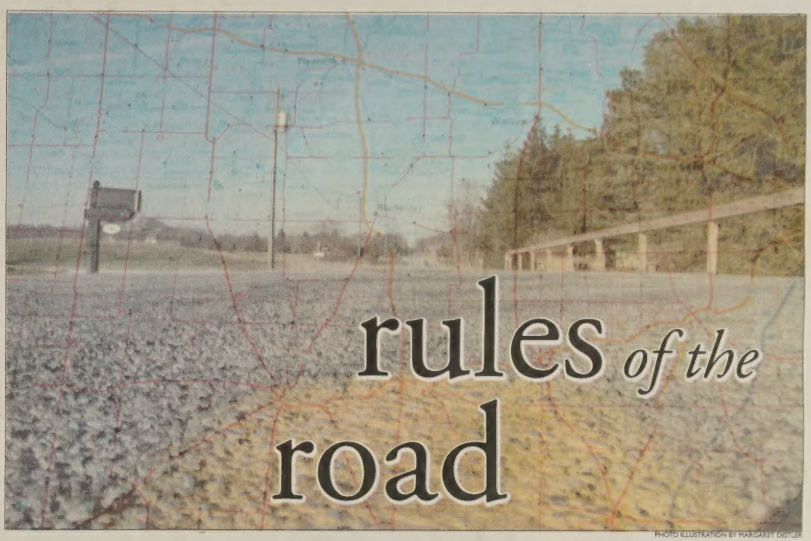

rules *of the* road

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MARGARET DIETER

Winter driver's education course continues to be popular choice

words *from the* wise

Driver's education instructor Mr. Shawn Harkness shares his top driving tips for young drivers.

-Start driving in a parking lot or somewhere non-threatening
-Repetition is vital: the more you drive, the better you will become
-Driving is a lot like riding a bike, it will take practice and time
-It's important to take driving as the serious responsibility that it is
-Don't forget about the dangers that come with driving a 2000 lb or larger vehicle

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

It was an unusually warm winter morning, but students could still see the ghostly outline of their breath as they sauntered through Homestead's front doors at 6:00 a.m. Some of them, particularly the father of Rio De Santo (9), had been waiting patiently in their comfort of their own cars since as early as 5:15 a.m. Slowly, a sort of caravan formed in the faculty parking lot of parents and their sons or daughters. Their gazes, through sleepy eyes, were fixed on those doors, anticipating the subtle click that would indicate their unlocking.

As the first class of Homestead's drivers' education winter session approaches, such a scenario is not uncommon. Applicants continue to arrive as early as an hour and a half in advance to insure their placement in the class. This year's registration date, Wednesday, January 9, concluded with 105 students being signed up within 40 minutes.

"(The class) always seems to fill up," assistant principal Steve Lake said. "(There has) been little if any change (in its popularity)."

The program, headed by Lake, has been a consistent choice for Homestead students due to its convenience and comparatively low cost (local alternative Safeway Driving School offers similar services with "private" driving instruction for 37% more than Homestead's $310 price tag). Approximately 260 students, primarily underclassmen, complete the Homestead drivers' education process each year, generating upwards of $80,000 in revenue for the school.

Only the first 130 students to apply are accepted in the winter session, which is held on various dates from January 14 through through February 21.

Homestead business teacher Brian McNeal, who has been teaching drivers' education at Homestead for 10 years, believes the "First Come First Serve" advisory on the sign-up form instills uncertainty in potential students.

"People are always worried," McNeal said. "We're trying to be as fair as possible."

The drivers' education staff has "thrown

SEE DRIVING on page 2A

BRIEFS

SAT PREP

Sign up by Mar. 11 in order to join the SAT Verbal and Math Preparatory classes currently offered at Homestead. These classes will prepare students for the challenging English and Math portions of the SAT and will help them understand definitions and essay-writing techniques. Stop by Student Services or the Main Office to sign up for the first session on Mar. 19.

VARIETY SHOW 2008

The 2008 Variety Show is scheduled to take place on Thursday, Mar. 13, produced by numerous members of Student Government and the Spartana staff. Anyone interested in auditioning for the show can pick up a form in student services, the front office, or in room 531. Auditions will be held Feb. 21 and 22. A mandatory rehearsal is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11 until 5 pm. Contact Greg Kyes (12) or Erin Quinn (12) with questions or for more information.

NAND DODGEBALL RESULTS

The NAND Dodgeball Tournament was hosted last Saturday Jan. 19 at the Jorgenson YMCA. This was a three and a half hour long battle where the Monstars defeated the intimidating Staff team to win the championship game. The tournament was held as an opportunity for students to have some fun for free with a pledge to stay away form drugs and alcohol.

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Show choirs back in groove

By Ashley Heath
Writer

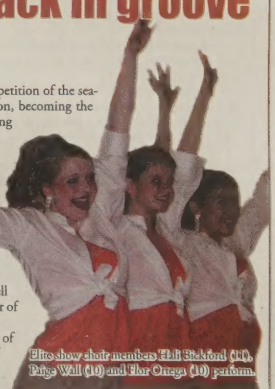
Show choir dazzled the judges at their first competition of the season last Saturday. Elite outshined their competition, becoming the ladies champion and Class Royale, after advancing to finals with five other teams, received 4th place. Carson Royer (10), from Class Royale and Melody Bledsoe (11), from Elite were both recognized as Outstanding Performers in their respective choirs.

Competing as the only school from Indiana, they performed a Grease medley and other selections from the '60s and '70s. The groups left Friday morning to travel to Garfield Heights in Cleveland, Ohio and competed against 18 other schools.

"I think it's important that we get our season off to a good start which is why it's important we do well at this competition," Elizabeth Funk (11), a member of Elite, said before the performance.

A good season for the groups would not be out of the ordinary. The groups have accrued a number of

SEE SHOW CHOIRS on page 2A



Elite show choir members Elli Bickford (10), Paige Wall (10) and Flor Ortega (10) perform.

PHOTO BY KYLE DOUDS

Acoustic club brings music lovers together

By Hana Svetlovics
Writer

Welcoming all interested musicians, a new acoustic music club has formed. Led by English teachers, Stephen Clough and Howard Jankowski, the group has recently begun practice, giving students a fun way to employ their musical gifts. Getting off to an inspiring start, the new club recently held its first gathering.

PHOTO BY SUZIE KEECER

Clough sings with his guitar.

"We had nine or 10 [students] at the first meeting," Jankowski said. "All but one had something prepared to share."

Tentatively meeting every Thursday in Clough's room, the club has a schedule as laid back as the music which they play. Encouraging its members to mold its future, the club is open to the suggestions of those who choose to participate in it. The acoustic club has yet to decide on a venue in which they will hold their first performance. Whether their goal is to play a show for the school or host an informal coffee house performance, it is up to the members to decide how they want to share their musical talents.

Not only is this group open to participants from every grade level, but it is also suitable for every level of talent. Although there are many musical groups available to students, like marching band and show choir, this group differs in one major way: they have nothing to prove. The purpose of this group is not to practice and perfect any particular skill; rather it is a group for people who simply love music and having a good time while making music with other students.

"We're not trying to perfect anything," Jankowski said.

Although the group is full of talented musicians, it is also a place for learning. Welcoming all interested students, the club is willing to work with anyone who will put forth the effort to come to meetings and play to the best of their ability.

"Don't be intimidated," Jankowski said. "I'm pretty much a beginner in playing guitar. There are no requirements... just come and listen if you're interested."

Thus far, vocalists and guitar players have been the most prominent members of the club, so

SEE ACOUSTIC on page 2A

Speech & Debate 07 - 08 Files

S&D HOMESTEAD SPEECH & DEBATE

Recent meets tests speaking, presentation skills of members

By Celia Grundman
Writer

On January 12th, Homestead's Speech and Debate team continued their season with a meet at Southside High School where they participated in various events.

For the speech team, Grace Talley placed 4th in dramatic interpretations, Duncan Rodman placed 4th in discussion, and Anirudh Rudd placed 8th in U.S.

"I enjoyed meeting all kinds of people from the meet this Saturday. I didn't realize that even though it's such a competitive atmosphere that people could be so nice and encouraging," Grace Talley (11) said.

For the debate team, partners David Greco (12) and Yogesh Jonna (11) won two rounds and partners Dheevena Reddy (11) and Ashley Heath (11) won one round.

"A lot of people don't want to join debate because it's basically a culmination of everything people tend to hate: public speaking, lots of research, and having your intelligence not only questioned, but also judged. But even though this can be a pain, if you learn and improve these skills, the advantages are endless. So many people, whether they are college admissions officers or local business professionals, wish they would have taken debate in high school because they realize how vital those skills are," Ashley Heath (11), debate president, said.

Speech participants can choose which events they want to participate in; these events range from humorous interpretations to extemporaneous speeches and radio broadcasting.

"I go with the humorous interpretation because I'm not a serious person at all. Facts, dates, and names aren't the things that stick. In my humorous speech I get to be a southern beauty queen and the entire situation is just so funny and laid back. Because it isn't so serious you can't take yourself too seriously and that's a nice feeling," Talley (11) said.

SEE SPEECH on page 2A

"Speech helps with interviewing skills and makes you more comfortable when talking in front of large groups of people."

David Greco (12)
Speech Team Member

PHOTO BY ZACH VESSELS

Scheduling causes problems

By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

It was a typical day for the start of second semester; the hallways were filled with pink sheets of paper that held a student's second semester schedule and students wandered from class to class hoping to find friends along the way. However, the correctness of these new schedules was debatable. Even with automated scheduling that is done through Powerschool, there are still problems that arise, which leaves students finding their way to student services once again.

"We had a total of 234 students sign-in [to student services] on Tuesday," Cindy Fitz, Guidance Secretary said. "[There were] 104 students on Wednesday and 52 on Thursday."

One of the most common scheduling changes comes when a student wants to drop a class for a study hall. However, other situations arise when a schedule is inaccurate; there may be too many periods, too few, or students in classes they never signed up for.

"This semester I had nine periods," Meredith McCracken (12) said. "I had two seventh periods, two third periods, and I was in economics twice."

Although schedules are generated by the computer, errors occur when counselors change classes to better suit the student's wants or needs.

"Powerschool does not give a student two classes the same period," Diane Rice, school counselor, said. "When counselors begin to make adjustments issues arise. Powerschool makes other errors but instead of giving a student two classes the same period it would have kicked out one of your selections altogether. Some of these errors must be rectified even if classes are full as students need certain courses to graduate.

Every student that has scheduling problems is directed to their counselor during the first few days of the semester. Depending on the problem, most issues can be remedied within one to twenty minutes. However, with the number of students that need help and the time it takes to fix problems, scheduling has always been an issue the school has tried to perfect.

Although scheduling is not the only reason Powerschool was adopted, it compares well to systems such as Centerpoint or SASSI (which permitted arena scheduling, a system that allowed students to pick their classes, periods and teachers on a seniority system).

"I think the greatest advantage [of Powerschool] is being able to work from home or another site. This access not only allows us to fix schedules but to view a student's information and answer e-mails because we now have access to the information." Rice said.

However, a priority of students in scheduling is being in classes with their friends, a factor that they have no power over in an automated system.

"I just wish I could have been able to decide when I took my classes," McCracken said. "It doesn't seem like Powerschool or Centerpoint are working better than arena scheduling and at least in that system students had a chance at getting what they wanted."

Despite this advantage, SASSI had many difficulties incorporating this method.

"SASSI actually gave students a schedule much like both Centerpoint and Powerschool," Rice said. "We then took all students out of all sections and put them back in when the students came through with their selections. Allowing the computer to do this work for us is more efficient no matter which system we are working with."

Although issues arise for some students, others received accurate schedules that were error free.

Student Government, with the help of the Aboite New Trails, is starting a district-wide project to build a memorial to commemorate students who have passed away while they were attending SACS. The memorial will be a garden and bench area along the Aboite Trails with a labeled brick for each fallen student. The project will cost $25,000 dollars to complete, and Student Government needs monetary donations from community members. To contact HHS Student Government about donating to the memorial, call them at (260) 431-2942 or e-mail them at hhsstugov@sacs.k12.in.us.

SPEECH Cont. from page 1A

As for the debate team, "The National Forensic League (NFL) puts out a national topic once a month, and students research and prepare arguments for both sides of the topic. At meets, the flip of a coin determines which side they argue for," assistant speech and debate coach Joe Wolter said.

The debate topic for the month of January is "In a democracy, civil disobedience in an appropriate weapon in the fight for justice." Debate participants can be in Lincoln Douglas, where one person argues against another, in Public Forum, where two member teams debate positions with another, or Policy Debate, which also uses two-member team but debates a policy topic that remains the same year-round.

"Students go through three preliminary rounds and a champion is declared in the final round," speech and debate coach Travis Fisher said.

Students will debate next at the NFL District Debate on January 25 and 26 at Columbia High School. Afterwards, they will attend the Indiana High School Forensic Association (IHSFA) State meet on February 1 and 2. The IHSFA state meet for Speech teams, however, is not until March 28.

"The season so far has been all right. The team has a lot of talent but not too high membership. Basically, we've got quality but not quantity," speech president Duncan Rodman (12) said. "Speech really helps English and communication and improves conveying opinions and thoughts. You can apply what you learn in school to your speeches."

DRIVING Cont. from page 1A

around some different ideas" and may be looking to do "something new" next year, according to McNeal.

He also notes the possibility of change may be undermined because the early morning sign-ups haven't truly created any other obstacles besides maybe opening the front doors earlier than normal.

Third-shift janitors set up a few tables the night before, the sign-ups and the rest of the situation is handled by the drivers' education coordinator themselves.

Braxton Johnson (9), the second applicant in line, explained his motivation for waking up well before five o'clock and arriving at the parking lot at 5:30.

"I really want to do this so I can get my permit when June comes around," Johnson said. "I really want to get this started now."

As of the beginning of the week of January 14, five spots still remain open for the winter session of Homestead drivers' education. Any interested students should visit the treasury office for more information or to submit their sign-up form.

ACOUSTIC Cont. from page 1A

exotic musical talents are welcomed in order to give the group a variety of talent. One specific instrument the group is looking to fill is that of an apt pianist.

"Don't be shy," Katie O'Keefe (12) said. "Everyone there is in the same boat... no one is judgmental."

With an atmosphere that encourages musicians to release their creative energy, many students take refuge in the young group. Club members explain that the group is very laid back and a great place for those who love playing an instrument to informally share their talent.

"[The acoustic club] is a musical outlet for people interested in music," Naomi Killham (12) said. "It's nice if you just want to jam."

Without the embarrassment and intimidation of an onstage performance, the acoustic club also hopes to offer modest musicians a way to express themselves through music in an inconspicuous environment.

"[I want] to create a venue for wallflowers," Clough said. "I was one of them in high school."

With his trips through Europe as his inspiration, Clough was excited to be the co-leader of this new musical club. After having a memorable experience at the Keighly Folk Club in Europe, the self-taught guitar player and singer deepened his already tremendous appreciation for acoustic, Celtic and folk music. Clough explained that, at the club, either one person or a group of people started making music, and the audience was encouraged to join in, especially at the chorus. Participation was completely voluntary, so if one did not want to share one's musical ability, one was not forced to do so. Like the Keighly Club, students who join this new group can simply say "pass" if they do not wish to present their talent.

PHOTO BY BUZZ KEICH

Tareq Abdel-Khaleq (11) plays along.

Though the group is still in its formation stages, Clough has high hopes for its future, looking to hold a relaxed performance in a local coffee venue.

"We'd like to do a Coffee House show," Clough said. "The audience is also an important part of [the show, and] we want people to enjoy listening."

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Students excel in academia

By Flor Ortega
Writer

Every high school student dreads the day when it's time to take a test. Everyone sits still concentrating and trying to go over the study guide once last time in their heads before the teacher gets to their row and passes out the time consuming test. For members of the Academic Decathlon team, tests are a major part of competing.

This year Homestead's Academic Decathlon team placed extraordinarily well at the competition held on January the 19th. For the past 4 years in a row Homestead has made it to state, which is held at Purdue University. They have also finished in the top 10 at the state competitions for the past 4 years.

"This years team is more dedicated then last years team. We have a lot of hard workers and people who want to be there and who care about doing their best," Becky Price (12) said.

The Academic Decathlon team is composed of three students with grades within the A's range, three within the B's range and three within the C's range. The members had to take a total of 10 different tests. They also had to give a speech, an interview and write an essay. Every year a different topic is picked; this year's topic was the Civil War.

"Preparation can be difficult because the packet of information we get is about the size of two text books. It is hard for me to read it for a long period of time, but I eventually get through it. The hardest part for me is the speech and interview. I am horrible at speeches and begin to stumble on my words so this year that was my main focus," Stephanie Raiman (12) said.

The team orders subject-specific packets/study guides from the state and members received them in late October to commence preparations. They were also required to read the book *Red Badge of Courage*. The students were then left to prepare on their own time.

"I've been doing decathlon for two years now and I never feel that I have prepared enough. Even if I have read all the material and have practiced my speech, you know there are people out there who have the whole packet memorized. I felt better about this year though because I liked the topic better," Raiman said.

Although the members had to prepare on their own time, different subjects were assigned to certain days of the week for study meetings. This gave the students a chance to meet with their coaches and ask any questions they had. Different teachers were assigned different subjects. Mr. Baker was the english, speech and interview coach. Mr. Stumpf was the science coach, Mr. Jankowski was the fine arts coach, Mr. Livensparger was the social studies coach, and Mr. Stalley was the mathematics coach.

"The most enjoyable thing about Academic Decathlon would have to be the people you get to be around. All 5 coaches are fun, funny, and knowledgeable about their subjects. My teammates are wonderful, hard working people who I love to be around," Price said.

In order to raise the necessary money for buying the materials needed and the money needed for participating in the competitions, the team organizes a fund-raiser. This consists of selling sandwiches at the competitions. Since Homestead hosted this year they received a $300 discount.

PHOTO BY KYLE DOLPLE

Jovial Class Royale juniors, Kimi Holmes, Alex DeFreeuw and Jenna Clark perform Jelly's Jam.

SHOW CHOIR Cont. from page 1A

titles from past competitions including 'Best Vocals,' 'Best Choreography' and 'Best Backup Band.'

To prepare for their season, Elite and Class Royale each practice twice a week for two hours after school. For competition season, though, their schedule often demands early morning call times, late return trips, and all-day practices like the Tech Day they had on the Saturday before competition. It lasted from 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and included a full-dressed performance, a visit from their choreographers, a parent meeting and a potluck meal.

But, as with many activities, their dedication and commitment only helps to make it a more fulfilling experience.

"The amount of fun, the amount of enjoyment, the amount of joy you get from it is exactly proportional to what you put into it," Keith Touchton, choir director of 25 years, said.

Outside of school, members can practice the routine with DVD's which are recorded by their choreographers Mike Weaver and Tara Tober. Members are also strongly encouraged to take vocal lessons to supplement their instruction in class.

This personal attention outside school can lessen what Touchton describes as the hardest part of directing choir.

"Everybody takes correction or suggestion or even conversation differently," Touchton said. "You have to find a way so that everybody understands what you mean."

Many of the singers also recognize this obstacle that comes from being such a large and dynamic group.

"The hardest part about show choir [is] getting the whole group to cooperate," Bledsoe said.

The Elite choir is made up of 48 girls and Class Royale consists of a mix of 41 boys and girls. Anonymous Blue, their backup band, has 18 members.

Members work hard to overcome these inherent obstacles of different personalities and experience levels to put together a show.

"It's not just a bunch of girls giggling in a room. It's a lot of hard work, but in the end it all pays off when you're on stage," Molly McMahan (9) said.

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Opinion

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Friday, January 25, 2008

Republican candidates square off

McCain tough on terror, call for tax cuts

Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

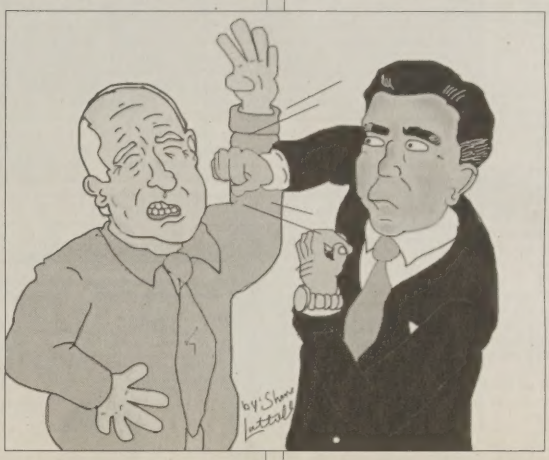
John McCain may well be the next president of the United States. A senator from Arizona, McCain is coming off of wins in New Hampshire and South Carolina primaries and is currently right at the top of the pack in the race for the Republican nomination.

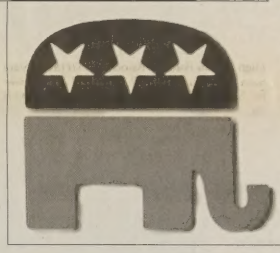
McCain's life has revolved around public service since his days as a pilot in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War, during which he was taken as a POW. After serving in the military, McCain began a political career and was elected to the senate in 1986 after serving Arizona as a representative since 1983. McCain has had a reputation as a "maverick" during his years in the senate, willing to defy the party line as he did when he proposed a campaign finance reform bill with Russ Feingold in 2002. McCain also started as a vocal opponent of the Iraq War and former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in particular. McCain felt that the U.S. was conducting a half-hearted war effort and said that he would have expected the American people to make more of a sacrifice. So when the troop surge was proposed a little over a year ago, McCain was a strong supported of intensified U.S. efforts in Iraq.

McCain has run for the presidency before and at age 71 would be the oldest person ever elected to a first term as president. McCain's age, however, only adds to his mystique and reputation as a tough, no-nonsense politician. Throughout his campaign, McCain has promoted himself as a candidate willing to reason and be honest with people. His campaign bus is called "The Straight-Talk Express," and McCain has earned a reputation as a strong and trustworthy leader. This is perhaps McCain greatest strength. George W. Bush's presidency has caused, whether justifiably so or not, the American people to lose faith in the presidency. While he is still a member of the Republican Party, McCain's "straight-talking" reputation will serve him well in a national election. McCain has the kind of demeanor and reputation to restore the people's faith in the president.

Drawing heavily on his background in the military, McCain has focused on national security concerns throughout his campaign. Now, however, as fears about economic recession increase, McCain will be forced to shift focus to the slumping U.S. economy. Evoking Ronald Reagan, McCain has laid out his economic plan that calls for tax cuts and restrictions on "pork-barrel" spending. McCain characterized his plan as "progrowth, less taxes, and less spending." McCain would lower corporate tax rates which would expand business and create more opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship. He also supports a tax credit to promote research and technological development. McCain has thus far focused more on long-term economic growth than the short-term plans that would supposedly provide relief as proposed by McCain's rivals.

After his victory in South Carolina, McCain made a speech that effectively summarized his campaign. "I am running to keep America safe, prosperous and proud. I am running to restore the trust of the American people in their government. I am running so that our children and their children will have even greater opportunities than the ones we were blessed with. I am running so that every person in this country, now and in generations to come, will know the same, sublime honor that has been the treasure of my life: to be proud to be an American." John McCain is an authentic American; and a man to whom I feel secure in trusting the leadership of the free world.





Mitt eyes the economy, leads early polls

Ian Strelic
Writer

That time has come again - time of speeches, American flags, and those irritating signs absolutely everywhere - that is right folks, it is election season 2008! Only this year is special for many of our school's seniors, as they will be of legal age to vote come Election Day in November. For those of you who have actually considered voting and taking a part in the government, Mitt Romney may be a strong choice.

The republican, and former Governor of Massachusetts, has a strong career of leadership and experience.

He was born on March 12, 1947, in Detroit, Michigan. He currently lives in Bloomfield, Michigan, with his wife Ann and five sons.

He has graduated from Harvard's Law and Business schools, Brigham Young University, and Cranbrook School. He founded Bain Capital, in addition to serving as the vice president in the company Bain and Co. In 2002, he participated in the Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the Winter Olympics.

More important, however, are Romney's positions on the major controversial issues of today. Most significant on this list is probably the Iraq War, closing rapidly on the 5-year mark since its beginning on March 20, 2003. When President Bush vetoed a spending bill on the war that would have otherwise had the troops moved out by March of this year, Romney supported him. He's also shown support for sending more troops to Iraq, as well as consistently opposing troop withdrawal.

Next on the list of major issues is abortion. In regard to abortion, Romney supported abortion rights in 2004 during his bid for a place in the United States Senate. However, he opposes abortion in most cases, except for in the instances of rape, incest, or protection of the life of the mother.

In regards to other issues, Romney has supported President Bush's tax cuts, has suggested an independent panel for the revision of social security, opposed same-sex marriage, and gone so far as the use of state police in immigration enforcement and thinks a better system is needed for employers to verify the legal status of their workers. He's also backed gun control laws limiting or eliminating the sale of assault weapons, though he has shown no opposition to the Second Amendment's right to bear arms.

When it comes down to actually voting however, it is very important to do your own research and understand where the various candidates stand. It's unlikely, though not impossible, that one candidate will support or oppose every issue in the same manner as the voter, so it is necessary to understand the position of every candidate involved. In the last presidential election, only 56 percent of the U.S. population chose to head to the polls and vote.

Whoever you choose to vote for, keep in mind the emense political power of Mitt Romney.

Separation of church and state is clear, concise

The Friday video announcements have been filled with unpredictable segments throughout the course of the year. Though most have been due to technical glitches or mistakes on behalf of the news anchors, none have been so discussed as the conclusion to last week's announcements.

For those who missed the announcement, it began with a student recruiting members for an organization: The Fellowship of Christian Athletes, otherwise known as the FCA. The segment proceeded to show an administration approved message giving an overview of the group's ministry.

However, students only saw up to the point where the video asked, "What if it were possible to see the world impacted for Jesus Christ through the influence of athletes and coaches?" After roughly thirty seconds the video was abruptly stopped, in accordance to school requirments regarding announcment length.

Classrooms immediately broke into discussion regarding the message. Did the announcement violate the Constitutional principle of the separation of church and state?

Homestead students have participated in the FCA for the past three years as an organization that met separately from the school. As would be predicted, the FCA now wants modify their group organization to become an official Homestead club. If the FCA became a club, they would be able to advertise meetings by hanging posters on the walls and via video announcements. The Editorial Board feels that having the FCA as a school club could benefit students but the organization must tred softly and can not activly seek religious conversion in students.

The group is a nationally based organization which promotes Christian values to athletes, coaches, and athletic fans. The FCA claims that they would not require their members to be of the Christian faith. We feel their name suggests otherwise.

Our issue, however, does not lie with the discriminatory principles in which this club would undoubtedly cause, but rather the inclusion of any religion in a public school. Under the Equal Access Act, students may start clubs in secondary public schools as long as the group is student-initiated, student-led, student-sponsored, and membership is voluntary. Teachers are strictly prohibited from participating in meetings in any way. However, if a school decides to allow one religious club the right to form, then they must allow all non-curriculum clubs the right to form. This would include Aethism, Wicca, Satanism, and Goth Culture. If the school does not allow one non-curriculum based club to start, then they must abolish all non-curriculum clubs.

It is important to remember that several non-school sponsored clubs such as Campus Life have been incredibly popular among Homestead students. This is because they support not only Christianity, but the club encourages good morals and connections between teenagers. We feel that if it were another religion being promoted, there would be little to no dispute about the establishment of the club. The problem is not with starting a religion based club in school, rather in society's lack of acceptance for the Christian faith as a whole. If there is a desire to form a club and students who deem the club appropriate (hence, student government's approval) then the club should be accepted.

The Editorial Board finds itself torn. One side suggests that Homestead not allow any non-curriculum clubs, but other individuals find no issue with an official FCA club. The first feel an abundance of school clubs divided by religion will only promote sectionalism within the school and that the clubs might overstep their boundaries. The latter group believes Homestead should step in another direction, that of following in other school's footprints who allow non-secular, secular, non-academic, and academic clubs alike.

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Editorial Policy

The *Spartana* is a tri-weekly production of Student Publications: Newspaper at Homestead High School. Its purpose is to enlighten, educate and entertain. The *Spartana* has, and may continue to, operate as a limited open forum for the free exchange of ideas.

Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the advisor in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material which is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material distruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

The Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues, and student journalist are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas and issues in their high school, community, nation and world according to policy number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those which could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to the *Spartana* at thespartana@gmail.com or dropped off in room 620.

Whose Line is it Anyway?

By Kara Hackett
Life Editor

Television is a wonderfully entertaining escape from reality. Whether I am watching "Friends" reruns or looking forward to next week's episode of "The Office," I sometimes find myself absorbed in my favorite television programs, planning my schedule around them and remembering the highlights of each episode to bring up in conversation with my friends the next day. Like most sitcom addicted fans, I can recite entire scenes of my beloved programs word for word without missing a beat; however, although quoting my favorite shows has been a treasured talent of mine for quite some time, it is only recently that I have taken the initiative to recognize the masterminds from whom my most cherished lines and beloved places of escape are coming.

Since the 5th of November, viewers throughout the country were harshly reminded who are the real stars of television's most popular shows. Pens down and picket signs up, script writers of nearly every show on television are taking part in the second Writer's Guild of America strike against studios and production companies. After keeping the peace for twenty years since the first strike, writers are seeking higher compensation for their work that is often used in media other than television. Because drastic new advances in technology have been made since the last compromise was reached, scriptwriters feel that it is time that their wages be upgraded so they can claim their share of the substantial profits brought in by DVD, mobile phone, and internet viewings of their shows. Unfortunately, however, claiming their "piece of the pie," the writers have met much opposition from production companies who say that they are asking for far too much. Unable to compromise and feeling that they must have a fair deal, the writers immediately went on strike, leaving America with scant new material for their beloved television programs and starting what appears to be quite a long line of re-runs on nearly every channel.

Upon first hearing about the writer's strike, I was rather frustrated with the whole situation. I kept thinking, "Couldn't they just make an agreement. They've been living with these wages just fine until now, so why do they have to go on strike? Why do they always need more?" After more criticism and pondering, I realized my thinking was rather hypocritical. Like the writers, I am rarely satisfied with what I have. Even with the holiday season leaving me with an ample supply gifts, all I can think about are all of the things that I still want. I have even made a little list in my head of all of the things I think I need. I have been blindly manipulated by the demands of our materialistic society. The contortions that money has made in my mind have made me second guess what matters most to me in my life.

As I have begun to further analyze the flaws in my own reasoning, I have come to understand the problems that the Writer's Guild of America seems to be experiencing too. Like the writers, I have become so comfortable with my current living standard that I am continuously demanding more, even though what I already have is quite sufficient. Nevertheless, the writers do have a point with their argument. I am sure that the millions of television fans around the world would testify that scriptwriters are very important people, saving us all from the relentless stream of new and not-so-improved reality TV shows. However, the wage of a writer does not always reflect his productivity.

Being an aspiring writer myself, I know just how hard it is to find a good-paying job in the "creative writing" field. Sometimes I have even thought that maybe I should compromise my treasured skill for a more practical career; nonetheless, every time I try to ignore my desire to write, I am unsuccessful because writing is who I am. Writing is my way of expressing myself. Sometimes I feel that I do not know where I am headed in life, but when I am writing, everything seems to make sense. For a little while, time seems to pass in slow motion, long enough that I can recognize all of the irony and the beauty in this world that I often overlook. I cannot stop writing because I love it, and it seems to me that perhaps the reason the script writers of America are on strike is because they have forgotten why they became writers in the first place.

The writers have lost that mysterious drive which motivates... intellects to pursue careers that may or may not lead to a prosperous financial status.

Kara Hackett
Life Editor

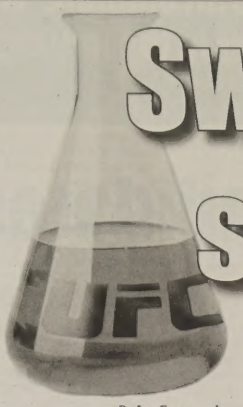
Infeeted with greed and the stress of relatively low wages, they have forgotten the power of their passion for their career. They have lost that mysterious drive which motivates even the most level-headed intellects to pursue careers that may or may not lead to a prosperous financial status. In high school, parents and guidance counselors often direct students away from that drive, knowing that it may not lead to a desirable financial position. Few are willing to forfeit money for happiness. However, every once in a while, there is an average person who has faith in himself and his goals, knowing that he must pursue what he loves despite all the risks that coincide with his decision, and it is that kind of person who will change the world.

In fact, it seems to me that many of the jobs that have the potential to actually make an impact on the world are jobs that have relatively low wages. The truth is that people, like writers, teachers and nurses, for example, are not being paid enough for the incredible work they do. Their argument is just, and it is easy to understand why they might desire higher wages in a society that only glorifies those who quench its materialistic thirst; however, the people who truly love what they do will be able to see the glory of their work beyond a financial standpoint.

Every person has a unique talent that keeps them motivated, helping them make sense of life, and unfortunately, not all of those special talents earn equal wages. Of course, there are always those lucky people whose passion just happens to be in a job field that will earn them millions; unfortunately, the rest of us must face reality, attempting to choose between what we love and the wages we think we need to survive. The bottom line: life is not fair. If it were, teachers would be earning higher wages than Hollywood starlets. Nurses would earn as much as the doctors they assist, and scriptwriters would be as famous and wealthy as the stars who portray the beloved characters they bring to life.

Like most viewers, I have spent years confused as to who I truly admire, attributing the hysterical comments made by my favorite sitcom characters to the actors and actresses who portray them; however, recently I have become aware that my gratitude has been vilely misplaced. The world is not perfect, but perhaps I could make my understanding of it a little more so by recognizing the real masterminds working vigorously behind the scenes to keep the show running and provide millions of viewers with a wonderful place of escape.

Sweet new science



More than bruises, blood beyond surface of UFC

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

It has been called "human cock fighting" and a "brutal spectacle." It is a sport where blood is common and fists fly, often connecting with bone crunching force. It is a sport where men choke each other to the point of blacking out and where arms are contorted in kimoras and armbars. It is the fastest-growing sport in America. "It" is the UFC, and it's here to stay.

The Ultimate Fighting Championships or UFC is a mixed martial arts organization that pits fighters against each other incorporating elements of boxing, kick-boxing, karate, judo, wrestling, and jiu-jitsu. The sport is violent, but like a fear of the dark, most of those who are scared by the UFC's image are simply afraid of what they do not understand. Misconceptions of the sport's nature persist, as do views that UFC is violence for violence sake. The UFC is a beautiful amalgam of fighting styles, and UFC contests are more chess matches than bar room brawls.

The athletes that compete in the UFC are some of the hardest working and best trained anywhere in the world. They are masters of many martial arts disciplines, training submissions, standup striking, and wrestling, and are in peak physical condition. These men made the decision to compete in UFC and understand that their choice subjects them to some element of risk when they step into the UFC's famed octagon. However, fighter safety has been emphasized ever since UFC President Dana White and his colleagues bought the UFC and cleaned up the rules. Fighters cannot strike to the kidneys, back of the head, or groin, cannot pull hair and cannot knee an opponent while he is down. UFC has also increased the authority of referees to stop fights, has doctors standing by at every fight with a mandatory post-fight inspection, and has developed a more sophisticated judging system. Despite its violent reputation, UFC maintains a remarkably clean record of fighter safety – with no fighter ever having been seriously injured in a UFC contest.

Critics of Ultimate Fighting also often fail to realize exactly what the sport is all about. A common misconception of the sport exists, as people visualize two caveman-like fighters swinging fists at one another. In fact, the UFC is a diverse and highly calculated and scientific style of fighting. Fighters execute complicated and dynamic submission attempts, struggling for position and leverage. Truly good UFC fights are fast paced with a blur of jiu-jitsu transitions and switches as fighters transition from seemingly vulnerability while one their backs to sudden victory with a triangle choke or arm bar. Despite what opponents of the sport would have Americans believe, MMA matches do not consist of two men punching mindlessly until one falls over.

UFC has a long history, beginning as a "no holds barred" fighting organization started by Rorion Gracie that sought to find the best fighter in the world, and subsequently the best style of fighting as well. The prominence of the Gracie family's jiu-jitsu style helped give the UFC recognizable names. The brutality of early UFC contests nearly brought an end to the organization whose original parent company, SEG, nearly went bankrupt. The UFC began without weight classes and constantly fluctuating rules about round length and other parameters. Also, the events were tournament-style so fighters had multiple fights in one evening. The early days of the sport bred mounting opposition and as such the UFC was dropped from many pay-per-view programming options. However, the UFC began to clean up its act when UFC was purchased by Zuffa LLC, enforcing stricter rules and regaining acceptance in mainstream public media. The reality T.V. boom brought UFC to millions of young adult males via The Ultimate Fighter series. As UFC grew it gained more fans drawn by the unpredictably, excitement, and action of a sport that incorporates myriad styles.

UFC is now the fastest growing sport in the United States. It has surpassed boxing in ratings for fights on numerous occasions. Although boxing supporters are hesitant to admit it, boxing continues to look for marquee match ups to save the sport, but falls short every time. Many fight fans who have watched both UFC and boxing simply find the UFC more dynamic and entertaining. UFC is also setting its sights on more mainstream sports. Dying sports such as hockey are being swallowed whole by the UFC's surging popularity. The popularity is no fluke, the UFC offers a sport with action, with strategy, with excitement, and with technicality all in one package. And the UFC is slowly gaining mainstream appeal, with UFC fighters on the covers of magazines like Sport's Illustrated and fight highlights being aired on ESPN's Sportscenter, which is surely an indication of the sport's growing acceptance

Critics need only look to the finale of this season's The Ultimate Fighter to see why the sport has become such a huge phenomenon. Fans saw everything from flying knees to armbars, with all the fights ending by either submission or knockout. The night included a blood-filled war, a technical exhibition, and countless displays of heart and determination as fighters came back from deep holes to finish fights by TKO and submission. On the same night as a premier boxing match-up between Floyd Mayweather and Ricky Hatton, the UFC asserted itself once more as the preeminent fighting platform.

The UFC has been the subject of countless opposition articles and has been criticized by politicians, activist groups, and ill-informed sports journalists alike. But the fighters in the UFC are athletes who make a living in a combat sport that, while brutal, is also fascinating and deeply complex. The UFC is poised to become one of the world's main sporting platforms as plans to expand the sport and develop fan bases in Mexico, Europe and Asia are sure to cement UFC as a force in the world of sport. And so, I encourage any critic of the UFC to put their bias aside, pull up a chair, and try to understand because, like it or not, the UFC is going to be around for a very, very long time.

CONTROVERSY RESPONSE

In attempt to satisfy critics of the league, the UFC gradually introduced rules to limit the sport's danger.

1. UFC XIV: Hair-pulling banned.
2. UFC XV: Manipulation of small joint manipulations banned.
3. UFC XV: Direct strikes to the head banned.
4. UFC XV: Strikes to the back of the neck banned.
5. UFC XIV: Gloves become required.
6. UFC XIV: Strikes to the groin banned.

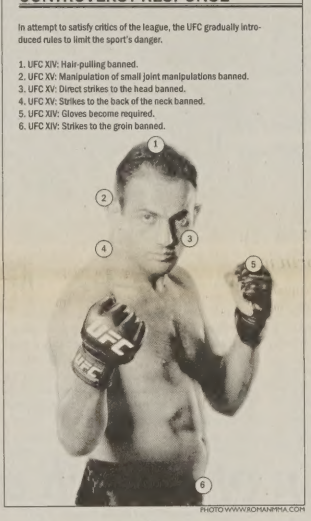


PHOTO WWW.ROMANMMA.COM

Iran-U.S. navy clash worsens relations

By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

For the past few years, United States and countries around the world have been at conflict with Iran over production of uranium, and a possible nuclear threat. However, this conflict reached its height, early January, with direct near aggressive confrontation between the two navies.

Three US navy ships were confronted by five Iranian Navy boats, on January 6, 2007, when passing through the Straight of Hormuz. The USS Hopper, Port Royal, and Ingraham manned their gun stations waiting for orders to shoot. The Navy officials claimed that the Iranian boats made threatening movements around and toward the boat, and at one point they were closer than 200 yards.

Soon the Iran Navy boats left but only after making threats. One transmission apparently said "I am coming at you. You will explode in five minutes." And before the boats left, they were seen dropping white boxes into the water around them.

The Straight of Hormuz is international water, where the Iranian Navy has no jurisdiction in questioning or policing. After the incident, officials had been trying to sort through the ambiguous details, and find out what really was the purpose of this confrontation.

Iran's reaction to the confrontation was denial, and minimization. In the version of the incident released by Iran, their speed boats, claimed not to be aggressive with any intent to harm. Iranian officials said that the occurrence was not confrontational, and a normal for the area.

President Bush responded to the events in his speech in United Arab Emirates, which also borders the same straight. The president said that Iran was the worlds leading sponsor in terror, and a threat to the security of nations around the globe. Bush also said he took the events in the Straight of Hormuz, "deadly serious".

It is dangerous to only accept the US navy's version of the story, and besides what the exact transmissions were between the ships, the circling of speedboats around warships is threatening. Tensions seemed to reside this December, when a US report revealed the Iran had halted its Nuclear Weapons Program in 2003, and had not touched it since. Days later Iran reported to be opening a Nuclear Power Plant, run buy 82 tons of purchased nuclear fuel from Russia. The project eased tensions as US was against the enrichment of Uranium by Iran, as nuclear fuel, fearing it could be used in nuclear weapons. However, Iran has continued uranium enrichment denying United Nations demands to halt.

The recent actions of Iran have heightened the already outgrown conflict between the nations. Furthermore, there are no diplomatic relations between the two nations. Switzerland represents the Western World in Tehran, Iran; where as Pakistan does the same for Iran in United States.

ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATIONS

On January 6, the Pentagon released a transcript of exchanges between the U.S. Navy convoy and a cluster of Iranian boats.

U.S.: "You are approaching coalition warship operating in international waters. Request you establish communications, identify yourself and state your intentions."
Iran: "I am coming to you."
U.S.: "Inbound small craft: You are approaching a coalition warship operating in international waters. Your identity is not known; your intentions are unclear. You are sailing into danger and may be subject to defensive measures. Request you establish communications now or alter your course immediately to remain clear. Request you alter course immediately to remain clear."
Iran: "You will explode after (indecipherable) minutes."

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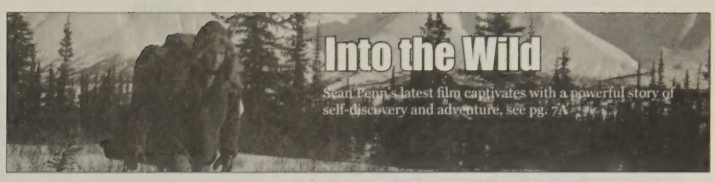
Life



Into the Wild

Sean Penn's latest film captivates with a powerful story of self-discovery and adventure, see pg. 7A

dancededication

PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER

By Flor Ortega
Writer

Five. Six. Seven. Eight. And the music starts: different notes and melodies combine to form a song as it blares through the room. A group of high school girls ranging from freshman to senior all move in sync to their precisely choreographed steps. To the members of the Dance Team, their routines are not only scrutinized at competitions, but they taken for a grade as well.

For the girls, conditioning started in the summer, taking place every Tuesday and Thursday morning for two hours. The girls then participated in different workshops and camps to improve on their techniques.

"The dance team is a year long activity that requires a lot of time, dedication and strength", Gabi Aquaro (12) said.

Apart from regular after school practices they have on different days of the week, the dance teams also have seventh period of the regular school day to practice.

"Having a period of the day devoted to dance really has helped our team improve," Amanda Arnold (9) said. "The extra 45 minutes every day gives us a chance to stretch and run over the dances which ultimately leads to us scoring higher at competitions, staying flexible and fit and being better dancers overall."

The competition season started in December and ends in March. The Homestead Dance Invitational will be held next Saturday. Shirts are on sale prior to the event and serve as a means of admission.

Students are encouraged to attend the competition and support both the Varsity and JV teams. The teams compete through the IHSDTA (Indiana High School Dance Team Association). Varsity competes in Elite Pom, Elite Jazz and Elite Lyrical while junior varsity competes in only JV Pom and JV Jazz.

"My weekends during competition season are completely crammed with dance, dance and more dance," Aquaro said. "Competitions get me all nervous so there are times I wish I were at home sleeping instead of crammed on a school bus at 5 a.m. traveling to a competition."

> *"It stresses us out and even makes us cry sometimes, but we love to dance so its all worth it."*
>
> **Gabi Acquaro (12)**
> Varsity Dancer

Even though the dance team requires hours of sweating and working hard to pull of the routine, the girls find the experience satisfying and gratifying.

"Dance team is a major part of my life," Carrie Cummiskey (9) said. "I'm close with all the girls on the team, and it's so much fun; I devote most of my free time to dance. It's easy to maintain enthusiasm throughout the season because we're constantly working towards newer and bigger goals."

Through it all, the girls endure what the dance teams throw. They have a positive outlook, and are always completely optimistic.

"It stresses us out and even makes us cry sometimes, but we love to dance so its all worth it," Aquaro said.

Top: Smantha Stroh (10), Ashley Hulvey (11) Amanda Bird (11) perform during a sporting event. Below: Gabi Acquaro performs during a sporting event at Homestead.

PHOTO BY SUZIE

Jan Fisher works intently during her secretarial job in the discipline office. Besides coordinating day-to-day student discipline matters, she also is in charge of staff and student parking over the course of the year.

Secretaries key to well unified administration

By Meghan McArdle
Writer

Among the diverse amount of teachers, administrators and other staff members that don the classrooms, halls and offices, there is a group of under-recognized staff members who keep things running behind the scenes and help to create an organized and certainly unified environment. To students, they are simply known as the secretaries.

Every secretary has a different, specialized area in which they help to keep the school running. Their titles are self-explanatory as to where their office is located, but generally being a secretary encompasses more then just the basics associated with their specialized area.

"My job entails the paperwork and coordination involved in school discipline, but also certain things like student and staff parking, that aren't necessarily the first thing you may think of as discipline matters," Mrs. Jan Fisher, Discipline Secretary said.

Being a good secretary in a school with a large magnitude means a lot of patience, time and dedication to the job. According to: http://www.redgoldfish.co/uk, "Secretaries in state secondary schools or in independent schools are more likely to work all year round. They are expected to take their holidays only during school holidays. They are likely to work a 37-hour week."

This commitment is appreciated by both the student body and the staff.

"The secretaries are so much help. They are always willing to answer my questions, and help me figure out what I need to do, or where certain papers need to go," Ashley Torres (12) said.

"I think it is important to understand how a good secretary can make or break an organization. A good secretary is a person that can communicate in a positive manner to the public," Joe Updegrove, Athletic Director, said. "This person must know the answers to a wide variety of questions or how to get the answers. They are often the first line of communication with the public and in the school setting with the students."

Barbra Lake is the athletic secretary and is new to the Homestead school system. Lake was a twelve year veteran of Lawrence Central High School in Indianapolis and moved back to her hometown of Fort Wayne to be closer to her children and grandchildren. She has always been interested in athletics, starting with her children's participation in both high school and college sports.

"As an athletic secretary, it is my job to help the coaching staff and athletic office abide by the guidelines set up by the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA). I also keep all of the athletic records, as well as all of the paperwork from the athletes, like physicals. Finally, I check grades for all of the athletes to make sure they are eligible to participate according to the IHSAA academic standards," Lake said.

Another important administrative professional is registrar, Phyllis Nelson. Her job is not that of a secretary; rather, she keeps all of the school records.

"I started at Homestead in March of 1977. Back then, I was both the guidance secretary and registrar, but as the population grew the job was split into to because it was unmanageable for just one person," Nelson said. "Even now, we have more students and more counselors, but have fewer secretaries so a few more hours added to everyday would make the job less stressful."

Fisher, Lake and Nelson, all agree that the best part of their job is getting to work with the people on a daily basis. "The people are great! I like all the students, and staff. They really make the job," Nelson said.

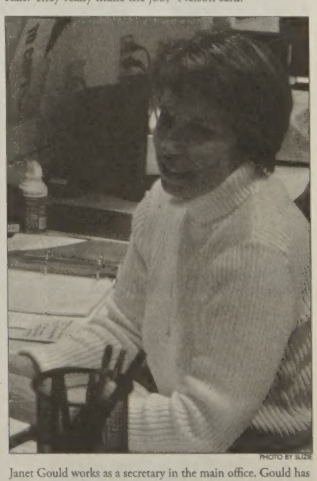


PHOTO BY SUZIE

Janet Gould works as a secretary in the main office. Gould has been here since 2000 and her duties include dealing with visitors as well as doing various "odd jobs" for the principals.

FCA works to bring together Christians

By Taylor Thompson
Writer

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) is an organization that has been in existence for quite awhile, but it has only recently been implemented at Homestead. Hoping that their positive influence can keep young athletes and students away from making bad decisions, the club allows teens to explore their faith in brief meetings after school.

Nationally, the club was founded in 1958 by Don McClanen. Since then, FCA has been persuading athletes, coaches and students around the country to use their influence over the general public to spread the word of Jesus Christ.

Bobby Bowden, head football coach at Florida State University, is an advocate for FCA who believes that any athlete or student who participates in the program is bound to find a greater meaning in his life.

"I am involved because I believe that is one of the answers to America's problems," Bowden said. "I think that when [young adults] go to FCA meetings and conferences, it prepares them for life. I've seen more [people] turn their lives around through their affiliation with FCA than any other branch, other than maybe the church…I've seen lives completely changed."

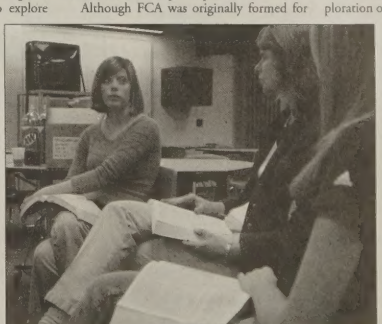
Because coaches and players in professional sports play a large role in many people's lives, FCA hopes use their influence to reach new audiences with religious messages.

Unfortunately, many famous athletes set bad examples for their young fans; thus, FCA does their best to reverse the damage done by such negative media. Although the main goal of FCA is to influence more people to accept Jesus Christ as their savior, everyone, including non-Christians, can support their encouragement of "integrity, serving, teamwork and excellence."

"Though the club is mostly for people who are already Christians, it wouldn't be a bad thing if non-Christians joined," Kelsey Amstutz (11), an FCA participant, said.

Although FCA was originally formed for athletes and their fans, it has grown into a program whose influence reaches an audience much larger than sportsmen. Freshman Geometry teacher and club sponsor Roseland Miller explains that although the program's name may be misleading, FCA is an organization that caters to all students despite their participation in athletics.

"You don't have to be an athlete to join FCA," Miller said. "It is designed around athletes, but we do have many members who are not athletes, so that doesn't matter at all."



FCA members Michal Knappenberger (12) and Erica Wurst (10) participate in a discussion regarding God's laws during a weekly meeting.

Students interested in this unique program are encouraged to attend the FCA's weekly meetings every Monday evening after school in the community room. Miller supports FCA's philosophy of sharing ideas and thoughts about religion with fellow Christians in the community. Because religion and faith are all about discovery through the exploration of one's options, Miller believes that students who attend FCA will be better equipped face the challenges of life after high school.

"I got involved in FCA because I feel like there are a lot of students here that maybe aren't in a good, strong youth group within their own church," Miller said. "I think that it's neat to see kids from different churches together. The purpose of FCA is for fellowship with other Christians. It's for students who have questions about Christianity that would like to come and get those answered. I just feel like [students] need to be more grounded in their faith so that whenever they do leave home, they're ready to stand on their own two feet. I just want them to make sure that they understand everything well."

Current FCA member Hayden O'Shaughnessy (11) enjoys attending the club. Although she believes that they tend to share a "very fundamental Christian viewpoint," she deems the club's values to be very practical, emphasizing that the best way to find oneself is through a deeper exploration of one's faith.

"I joined FCA to share my views about Christianity and learn how others view their Christianity," O'Shaughnessy said. "Together we can enlighten one another."

A passion for building

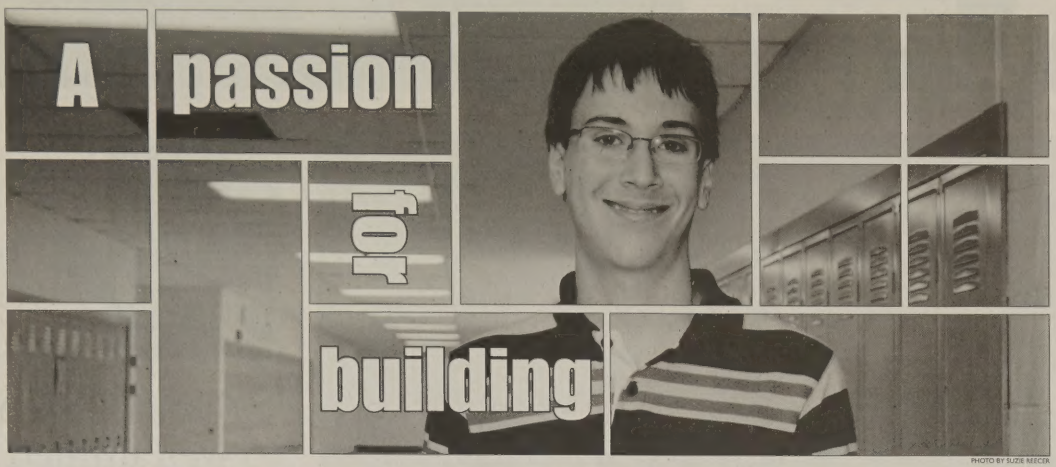


PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Ben Griffith (9) knows about pressure. So when his First LEGO League team swept the award categories and won the annual state competition on December 8, the loud background music and jam-packed stands of an IPFW auditorium had no effect on him.

His team, the ZBots, is comprised of 9-to-14-year-olds from numerous schools in the Fort Wayne area. The ZBots is one of more than 10,000 teams that compete worldwide in the First LEGO League (FLL), an organization hosting competitions that promote the use of LEGO bricks to create productive robots. Each year, the FLL recognizes a theme for its contests, this year being "Power Puzzle," a challenge involving alternative energy and tasks that included moving power lines and planting trees.

Next, the ZBots will travel to Atlanta, GA this upcoming April, where the team could earn a chance to meet George W. Bush.

Griffith sat down with The Spartana in the wake of what he calls "a fantastic sense of accomplishment" to discuss LEGO bricks, his team's energy audit of a local school, and the impending possibility of shaking hands with the President.

Spartana: What drew you to this league? Have you been a fan of LEGO bricks since childhood?

Ben Griffith: I've been playing with LEGO's for several years and I've heard about this before, but until recently, we never had a team to join. We know several of the parents at ITT Industries and they got together and decided that maybe it would be a good idea to form a team. We formed a team three years ago, and we had so many kids show up that we had to make it into two (teams). Then, last year, the coaches looked through the kids from the previous years and narrowed it down to the people who were really interested and that were good at it. So that left us down with four kids and then this year we ended up with my sister and a couple of other kids.

This competition focuses heavily on two aspects: LEGO-building and problem-solving. On which aspect do you pride yourself more?

Well, I'm kind of in it for both. I like building the robots and running them on the table, but also the problem-solving. This year's theme was "Power Puzzle." We had to figure out an energy audit on a building, and we chose Queen of Angels, a private school some of our teammates go to. We did an energy audit on their school and found out different ways they can save energy and money.

LEGO bricks are often viewed as toys that are meant for children. How does this competition disprove that belief and show that mature audiences can enjoy such a pastime as well?

(The competition) does show how you can use LEGO's. You can -- sort of -- accomplish things with LEGO's. There are adults that even make their living off of building with LEGO's. I know a lot of them who still do it as a hobby.

Your topic this year was "alternative energy." How did you try to put your personal views about this topic to use in the competition?

Personally, I think you just got to save energy. You save energy, you save money, you save the planet. Incandescent light bulbs -- not that great, but you can use compact fluorescent light bulbs instead. That's one of my favorite solutions just because it's cheap and you can do it in your own home.

How do the lessons and subjects learned in school help you with the LEGO contests and vice versa?

Well, there's problem-solving, which you use in almost every subject in school. That's one of the big parts of this competition. For example, you use math in order to determine cost savings in changing your light bulbs over. You also use math to determine how far a robot is going to travel.

Has the First LEGO League been covered by press and media this heavily in the past?

First of all, this is the first year anyone from this region, the "Science Central Region," has ever won the state competition. Usually there's a couple teams out in Lafayette that are really good. There are small articles in the paper every year because this is where the state competition is held -- at IPFW.

What's your next step after the Internationals and World Competition?

Next year, I can't compete, but I can be a mentor for the team, which means that I can't take an active role in the any of the presentations or robots. I can assist them with accomplishing their goals.

At these competitions you create real-life applications using LEGO's. Do you think one day that LEGO's will be used as effectively in the real world?

(laughs) That's probably not very likely. I mean, they're plastic.

Spartans improve themselves with New Year's resolutions

By Brad Lufkin
Designer

Struggling to overcome the lazy lifestyle of the winter blues, people can hardly push themselves to make even miniscule efforts towards self-improvement. However, despite the bitter weather and grey skies, many students believe that the New Year will bring about a much brighter future. Making ambitious plans for behavioral makeovers, students and faculty alike are trying to stick to their pesky commitments often referred to as New Year's resolutions.

Each New Year provides a fresh start, allowing people to make drastic plans to change themselves for the better. New Year's has always been a time for reflecting on one's past as well as looking into one's future; thus, it is the opportune time to set goals and to commit oneself to making those goals a reality.

"My New Year's resolution is to stop biting my nails," Courtney Stace (11) said. "I have been seriously thinking about this resolution for about five years now because biting your nails too short can be very painful. But this time I am a little more dedicated to the cause."

Trying to break a destructive habit is a common form of New Year's resolution. Whether the habit is a monumental problem or a minute quirk, it is extremely difficult to abruptly put an end to an accustomed mannerism.

Although some students' resolutions are straightforward and can be easily diagnosed, others resolve to accomplish more difficult tasks by the end of the year.

"[My resolution] is to be an overall better person," Claire Libbing (10) said.

Becoming a better person is a common goal for people in a new year. Although it may seem to be easily attained by making small adjustments in one's attitude and actions, it is a more difficult task than it may seem. Nevertheless, with such a tedious task before her, Libbing insists on continuing her unique New Year tradition, making seven additional resolutions.

"Last year I started to make the same number of resolutions as the number in the year," Libbing said. "Last year I made seven [resolutions] and this year I made eight."

With such strictly set goals, some students go to extreme lengths to reach their destinations. It all comes down to determination and belief in one's self. If a student does not think that he can achieve his goal, he probably will not be successful. If a student puts effort forth to complete his task and truthfully believes he can do it, he will eventually accomplish what he set out to do.

"I have made resolutions in the past, and I have been successful in some, not all though," Stace said. "A few years ago my resolution was to run a complete mini-marathon and I accomplished that goal, so hopefully I'll achieve this one."

While many believe strongly in their resolutions for the New Year, some argue that good plans are not enough to bring about good changes. Inspiration and enthusiasm are a good start, yet with the wrong approach, the goal can be lost before it even begins.

"I haven't made [a resolution] this year," Susan Summers, social studies teacher, said. "The older you get, the more you realize you're just going to break them."

Some people feel that New Year's resolutions are rather senseless, pointing out that the yearly resolution model is not helpful for most goals because not every resolution can be fully completed within the span of one year.

"I don't set New Year's resolutions," Carly Anderson (11) said. "I just set a goal for myself at any time of the year, not always at the beginning of the year."

Although resolutions are thought to be carried out strictly on an annual basis at the start of each new year, it is important for students to realize that it does not take a calendar to provide them with the fresh new start they seek.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

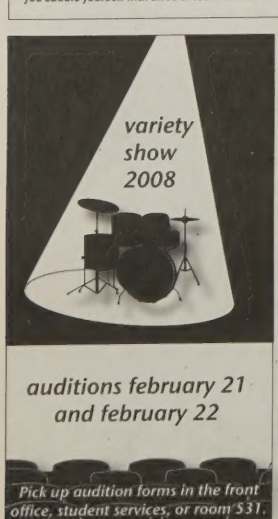
STEP ONE:
Aim low. It goes without saying that most New Year's resolutions are easier said than done—but if you set the bar too high, you are doomed from the start. Instead of a declaration like, "I will lose 30 pounds by April," set a more attainable goal, like losing 10 or 15 pounds.

STEP TWO:
Do not overload yourself. It is difficult enough for the average person to follow through on one ambitious New Year's resolution; why on earth would you saddle yourself with three or four? Choose the most pressing issue at hand—losing weight, finding a girlfriend, improving your relationship with your parents—and concentrate on that. Trying to do everything simultaneously practically guarantees failure across the board.

STEP THREE:
Tell everyone you know. One school of thought says that New Year's resolutions are best kept to oneself, but look at it this way: the more people to whom you announce your resolution, the more people there will be to prod you along if you fall behind. There is no shame in seeking help if you can not accomplish your resolution on your own.

STEP FOUR:
Reward yourself. Following through on a New Year's resolution is rarely easy, so a little Pavlovian conditioning goes a long way. If you have resolved to be nicer to people, buy yourself a cup of coffee after a difficult trial

STEP FIVE:
Wait until spring. Sometimes the best way to accomplish a New Year's resolution is to make it at a time of year of your choosing, rather than the one dictated by the calendar. A change of season will neatly coincide with the change you are hoping to accomplish in yourself.


variety
show
2008
auditions february 21
and february 22
Pick up audition forms in the front office, student services, or room 531. Forms are due by February 14.

Student teacher brings new approach to material

By Hana Svetlovics
Writer

Student teachers provide both students and themselves with new learning experiences that all can enjoy. While seeing a student teacher around the building is not uncommon for most students, it is always something unfamiliar at the same time.

Returning Spanish III students of Señora Toiyonna Arias are now learning under student teacher Miss Letisha Ahlersmeyer. As the semester progresses, student teaching will hopefully have a positive influence on all.

"As a teacher it's hard to relinquish control, but it's also refreshing," Arias said. "I'll learn new things with her fresh perspective…I have nothing but high hopes."

While the Spanish III curriculum is already set in stone, current students will learn the material in a different way than in previous years.

"Right now, my teaching is experimental," Ahlersmeyer said. "I'm going to try to incorporate activities, but you have to have a nice mix of everything. If you have games all the time, you won't learn anything."

While students are learning Spanish, Ahlersmeyer is also going through a learning experience. At the end of her student teaching, she will have gained 12 credits and her Bachelors Degree in Spanish and teaching from IPFW.

While 10 weeks at Homestead is part of her degree requirements, student teaching is more of a job than a class.

"I'm graded partially by Señora Arias and partially by my supervisor," Ahlersmeyer said. "I take on the responsibilities of Señora Arias, like grading papers, meetings in the morning, meeting kids after school, and making up tests, but I don't have homework."

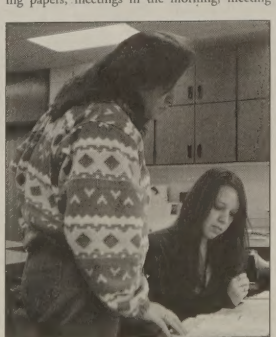


PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Spanish teacher Toiyonna Arias helps student teacher Letisha Ahlersmeyer prepare for a lesson.

With Ahlersmeyer teaching four classes of third year students, and team teaching fifth year students, Señora Arias has given up an important aspect of her job.

"I'm going to miss the interaction with students," Arias said. "It's my favorite part. I like to see students grow."

Even with this setback, Arias still sees an amazing opportunity.

"For student teachers it's a wonderful experience," Arias said. "She's able to practice before she has to teach it on her own, with someone to help her."

While benefiting future teachers, the program also benefits the high school students enrolled in the course.

"It's a good experience for people who've had me before in class," Arias said. "They're exposed to a new style in class while they're still in their comfort zone, and they hear a different way Spanish is spoken."

Teaching is what Ahlersmeyer hopes to do with her degree, and she has general plans of what exactly she would like to do.

"At first I'd like to teacher at the high school level and to start in the Ft. Wayne area," Ahlersmeyer said. "It just depends on what school is open, and if they meet my criteria. I want a school that allows trips."

moviereviews

Adventures in the Wild

By Meredith McCracken
Writer

Imagine giving up all material possessions, destroying every trace of your identity, and relocating yourself completely to the untouched wilderness of Alaska. This is exactly the dream of Christopher McCandless, the main character in the film *Into the Wild*. Directed by Sean Penn, *Into the Wild* is based on John Krakauer's true story of the young man who sacrificed everything to fulfill his dream to live alone.

With its breathtaking cinematography, soulful soundtrack and stellar cast, *Into the Wild* is remarkable.

While at first McCandless's presence is a juxtaposition in the serene wilderness, by the end of the film his lifestyle blends right in to life in the wild. The movie contains beautiful shots of America's natural beauty, which include areas of northern California, the Colorado River and most obviously, Alaska.

Penn takes the unbelievable and true story and transforms it into an extraordinary journey of self-discovery for McCandless, who is played by Emile Hirsch. Hirsch's performance is complemented by Hal Holbrook, Vince Vaughn and Catherine Keener, who help the wilderness-bound McCandless throughout his trip. The most memorable of these performances is Holbrook's, as the widower veteran with whom McCandless lives for several weeks. The two connect on a grandfather to son level and their goodbye is nothing short of a tearjerker.

Eddie Vedder, the lead singer of Pearl Jam, composed the soundtrack for the movie, which is an emotional collection of acoustic songs that fits perfectly with the mood of the film.

While *Into the Wild* is not oozing with gore and action, it does keep the viewer hooked with the powerful story of self-discovery and adventure.

PHOTO STEVE'S MOVIE REVIEWS

Problematic moral situations develop in Juno

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

Juno, director Jason Reitman's refreshing take on the teenage pregnancy fable, may just be the comedy that saved 2007 from lowbrow oblivion.

In a year polarized by spectacularly disappointing caricatures and gratuitous penis odes (even Judd Apatow must be running empty on male appendage nods), *Juno* is an objective gem that faces the issues every other film of its kind has only halfheartedly danced around. Expectedly preachy at times, it funnels the awkwardness of its characters' plights into a final product that keeps the moral irony onscreen and out of the viewers' minds. Oh, and it's funny.

PHOTO HFX FILMS

Reitman, the satirical architect of 2005's *Thank You For Smoking*, has finally struck gold with a cast that puts forth some of the year's most down-to-earth performances. *Smoking*'s J.K. Simmons fills the shoes of Juno's blue-collar father, a feat that will place him above his aging association with the *Spiderman* series. Michael Cera of *Arrested Development* fame takes the deadpan humor he fostered in *Superbad* to new heights as Paulie Bleeker, the shyly oblivious culprit of Juno's unplanned pregancy. Most notably, though, is the movie's lead role, embodied by Canadian actress Ellen Page. I'm hesitant to offer any more credibility to the hype surrounding Page's breakout success in the United States, but she is the reason writer Diablo Cody's sharp-witted script is executed so successfully.

After cycling through multiple pregnancy tests, Juno MacGuff urinates her way to the cold, hard truth: her foolish intercourse with longtime pal Paulie is sadly consequential. Her first impulse is to abort the baby at a local clinic, but she second-guesses herself, returning home the same day to break the news to both her parents and her disturbingly promiscuous friend Leah (played by a dead-on Olivia Thirlby). Leah suggests putting the surprise child up for adoption, adding that she sees similar ads "all the time in the Penny Saver." Juno subsequently lands on the doorstep of the Loring family's suburban residence, face-to-face with spouses Mark (Jason Bateman) and Vanessa's (Jennifer Garner) torn ambitions over parenthood.

Juno is essentially top-heavy, with the majority of its blunt humor concentrated during the first half of the movie. The hilarity diverges harmoniously, though, as the reality of the situation is examined. Paulie, who is initially laissez faire towards the pregnancy, finally addresses the tension engulfing his friendship with Juno. Juno's parents begin to feel guilty that they've not set a correct example for their daughter, and her father for once shows an interest in her social life. What seems like a depression in the movie's progress may be passed off as boring in-between banter by more shallow moviegoers, but Juno is ultimately an uplifting drama first, and a culturally-conscious comedy second.

Although the movie feels like it is running in place at times, regurgitating pro-life sentiments, the plot brings just the right amount of closure. Even in the final minutes, the film sideswipes the cliches it has redefined so thoroughly. As opposed to this past summer's fairy-tale *Knocked Up*, Juno teaches us a lesson almost as honest as the green plus-mark its main character keeps regretting: in the real world, life's pace is not always a joke-per-minute or filled with ironically desirable happy endings. The film employs this message, and although it does not necessarily listen to its own advice as its resolution approaches, it is still the most intelligent movie experience involving a fetus so far this decade.

Musical expression becomes more than a stereotypical idea

I doubt that there is a single student at Homestead who doesn't listen, play or sing music at least once *Everyday (Dave Matthews Band)*. Whether we're running at the *YMCA (The Village People)* or just *Driving Too Fast (The Rolling Stones)* from point A to point B, we're constantly surrounded by a thumping bass, acoustic rifts and synthesizers that can shake a small house.

By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

That's the way we like it. For our generation, and many in the past, music is a form of expression, a constant background beat to our evolving culture. And although it's hated by grandparents that park their old Chevys at stop lights, we sing *Out Loud (Dispatch)* to our noise at every chance we get. Our ever-changing playlists and iTunes libraries mark our sense of self, maturity and growth over the years.

For me, I began as the stereotypical freshman, *Low (Flo-Rida)* on the seniority charts and listening to whatever I heard on Hot 107.9. And although *I Can't Explain (The Who)* exactly what happened, I found myself *Falling Out (Reliant K)* of the rap scene and listening to everything from country to slasher rock. Now, *I'm On the Edge of Seventeen (Stevie Nicks)* and completely proud of my refined musical taste to which my brother and his freshman friends cringe.

Almost as much as I love rocking out in my car and blaring music at threatening decibel ranges, I cherish music's indescribable ability to bring people together. Just as certain songs have become *Part of Me (Tool)*, they have become a key element of sports teams, friendships and quasi mosh pits at school dances. If you can *Name (Goo Goo Dolls)* one girl who lived through the 90's and won't *Stop (The Spice Girls)* and starts singing as soon as Baby, Sporty, Ginger, Posh and Scary begin warbling over the radio, *I'll Give It Up (Amos Lee)* to you.

Besides acting as group theme songs, music can portray our emotions when there is *No Other Way (Jack Johnson)* to communicate what we're feeling to others or to ourselves. This situation occurs often as we make our way though the *Strange and Beautiful (Aqualung)* days of adolescence. In a time of growth, when *Constants are Changing (Boards of Canada)*, we find that there are certain songs that perfectly match the *Sweet Emotion (Aerosmith)* that consumes our mind. Honestly, what can portray your pain as you realize that *Every Rose has a Thorn (Poison)* better than 80's big hair bands?

I could *Ramble (Led Zepplin)* on about various artist, favorite songs, and great concerts, but I'll end this *Dangling Situation (Simon and Garfunkel)* and clearly state that all italicized words are some of my favorite songs, followed by their artist which is contained in parentheses. *I Might Be Wrong (Radiohead)*, but it's definitely something to listen to as you travel *Home (Daughtry)*.

WHILE TP-ING MAY SEEM FUN, A LITTLE BIT OF TOILET PAPER CAN CAUSE A LOT OF DAMAGE

By Taylor Harruff
Life Editor

We've all seen it. The white strands of newly purchased toilet paper strung across some unexpected victim's front yard. Done in a matter of minutes, the countless rolls of randomly thrown bathroom tissue will take hours to clean up. No matter the damage that "tp-ing" can bring, a large number of individuals continue to put themselves at risk for some pretty serious consequences.

"It's a nice way to have a little fun and get a nice reaction out of some people," Brandon Saalfrank (12) said. "It's thrilling to worry about getting caught and it's fun to see people get frustrated."

While the majority of people who engage in the activity of "tp-ing" only do it for a good laugh, there is an equally large number of individuals who take it one step too far.

"We did a house and we thought it'd be funny to make loud noise so they'd come out and see it," Saalfrank said. "But the parents came out and were freaking out and then a cop came flying by with his lights on."

Oftentimes, the act of throwing toilet paper from one tree branch to another can quickly cross the line from a little joke, to property damage and possibly, vandalism. It typically starts with a few rolls of toilet paper, and then continues to escalate into different items, which can potentially cause property damage.

"One time we got a goat and stuck it in a kid's yard," Saalfrank said. "So when he woke up he had a goat in his yard. It's the best because no one knows what to do with a goat."

After waking up to a "winter wonderland" of toilet paper everywhere the targeted household members are left with the burden of cleaning up the cantalizing mess.

"One morning I woke up and looked out the back window," Demri Braun (10) said. "All I could see was white. It was everywhere, trees, bushes and my personal favorite, floating in the pool."

While it is not encouraged, a fair number of people still choose to participate in such activities. Some get away, simply moving on the next house, while others are left to face their punishments. At times they are only expected to clean up the mess they made, but more extreme consequences are possible. Possible community service hours, along with costly fines all add up to be greater than the one night of fun from throwing toilet paper over a tree branch.

"Serious punishment is a little harsh," Braun said. "A little TP never hurt anyone, just a slap on the wrist, nothing more."

Although the act of "tp-ing" may start as a funny prank to pull, it is definitely not recommended and in no way praised ,or accepted. One little prank can lead to bigger problems with the law, or the safety of the involved individuals.

PHOTO BY MIZE REECE, CARTOON BY SHANE LUTTRELL

"WHILE THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WHO ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITY OF "TP-ING" ONLY DO IT FOR A GOOD LAUGH, THERE IS AN EQUALLY LARGE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO TAKE IT ONE STEP TOO FAR."

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Sports

Taken Down

Wrestling team is second round. A third place finish in the NHC, with tougher conference in the state, has prepared them for what's to come. Photos on page 2B.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Nikki Wilson (11) goes up for a difficult shot against an opponent.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Racheal Kruse (11) fights hard to recover a ball underneath the basket.

PUTTING EVERYTHING ON THE LINE

By Kalyn Jorgensen
Writer

The Lady Spartans' hard work and dedication paid off when the team was given the opportunity to attend the Tennessee v. Notre Dame girls' basketball game. The ladies expected to just watch an intense game, but they were given so much more.

While at the Tennessee v. Notre Dame game, the Spartans were able to see two highly known people in the girls basketball industry, Pat Summit and Candace Parker. Summit is the coach with the most wins in NCAA history and Parker is the number one girls' player in the nation. Although the majority of the team was able to see Summit and Parker, one teammate was not so fortunate.

"I didn't get to see Pat Summit and Candace Parker because I was distracted by Mr. Parker and Charlie Weis's belt buckle," Jena Hamrick (9) said. "I wish I could have though because Pat Summit is a good coach that teaches a lot and Candace Parker is an amazing player."

The trip to Notre Dame gave the team a chance to learn new skills and bond.

"The game was awesome like it is every year," Rachel German (12) said. "It's a way for us to hang out together without the pressures of a looming game. It was great being able to bond with these girls through intense games of catch-phrase and running around Notre Dame trying to find light-up shamrock pins."

Although the Lady Spartans had some struggles at the beginning of the season with non-returning players, they have been successful since. With a 7-7 record, the team hopes to continue winning. The victories of the team have been accomplished with the help of players from every grade level. The team has a mixture of sophomores, juniors, seniors and one freshman.

"I really like playing on the varsity team because everyone treats me normal," Hamrick said. "They make it seem like I'm not a freshman."

After three years of being underclassmen on the basketball team, the seniors are very excited to be the head players. The seniors now have a responsibility to be role models to the younger players.

"There is a responsibility that comes with being one of the oldest, but it's nothing too hard," German said. "There have been no problems with underclassmen and I have really enjoyed being part of a team with these girls. I don't feel like there is a big divide between age groups; from the freshman to the seniors I feel we are a close team."

Because the Lady Spartans do not always draw as big a crowd as the guy's team, the players request a bit more attention from students.

The team's comraderie is considered by many to be their greatest strength. Without the experienced players of the past, this year's squad was forced to learn play off of each other's strengths and focus on the basic principle of working together. Despite their age and positional differences, the freshman point guard and senior center have both been integral parts of key victories throughout the season.

Since winter break, the team has racked up conference victories against East Noble and Columbia City, but lost a close game in the end of the fourth quarter to Bellmont. Despite pre-season predictions, the Lady Spartans currently stand in second place in the NHC with 4 wins and 2 losses. They tip off against DeKalb tomorrow night at 7:45 p.m. for their final game in conference play. The team expects a large crowd due to the middle school and Aboite Girls Basketball League's recognition programs, but also hopes to attract a well sized student section. The pep band will be present at the game as well.

"Girls' athletics don't always get the same attention as guy's do, so it would be great to have people come on out and support our team," German said.

INSIDE THE HUDDLE

2 - Kendra Dyson
4 - Jena Hamrick
10 - Erin Quinn
12 - Arezoo Nazari
22 - Sharde Carlisle
24 - Francesca Schmidt
30 - Rachael Kruse
40 - Terraysha Gordon
42 - Tori Rowe
44 - Rachel German
50 - Nikki Wilson

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Swim schedule leaves little time to relax

By Erin Quinn
Co-Editor-in-Chief

When Amy Gutwein (12) steps onto the blocks and takes her starting position before an ideal race, the only thoughts that are going through her mind are focused on the upcoming event. She knows exactly what she has to do. Get a good start. Don't jump the gun. Relax. Follow the plan.

She breaks the plane of the water after the signal and starts into smooth strokes, keeping pace with competitors until she has outlasted their strength reserves and pulled ahead for the win. Now is time for celebration. After setting specific goals, following through on a plan of action and achieving an extraordinary amount of success, celebration is deserved.

Gutwein is only one of the many swimmers who follow this process. The entire Homestead swimming program is built upon a foundation of goals, trusted training methods and a desire for success on multiple levels. Coach Chad Englehart, who was recently voted Northeast Hoosier Conference Coach of the Year, emphasizes the importance of setting realistic, yet challenging benchmarks that his teams should accomplish throughout the season. He has expanded the process of goal setting this year by conducting individual meetings with the varsity swimmers. By crafting his workout schedules weeks in advance for both the boys and girls squads, Englehart keeps precise control over the swimmer's progress.

"To be one of the best teams in the state, we need a coach that pushes us to the limits," Tim Veenstra (12) said. "I come into practice and expect Chad [Englehart] to bring a hard practice... I trust his ability to coach and train me."

Lately, the strenuous training schedule and year round workout regimen has begun to pay off for the Spartan swimmers. Both teams are ranked among the top five in the state and came out of natatorium-centered winter break by dominating the NHC meet on Jan. 12.

A talented set of upperclassmen led the women's team to the NHC championship by a resounding margin of 176 points. Key performers included the members of the record setting women's 200 medley relay: Emilee Keefer (11), Tori Bagan (9), McKenzie Bagan (11) and Kristen Witham (12). Keefer, Emily Haiffley (12), M. Bagan and Kristen Kinzer (11) set another conference record in the 200 freestyle relay. In addition to her two record setting relays, Keefer captured an individual record in the 50 freestyle race.

"I feel honored to be up on the record board as a junior," Keefer said. "It is definitely worth all of the hard work and effort to be able to hold NHC records."

Keefer was not the only swimmer to have had multiple victories at the conference meet. M. Bagan, Witham and Haifley also contributed in more than one swim worthy of All-Conference honors.

The men's team won the meet with a total of 557 points. Six Spartans contributed in multiple first place finishes to lead the team to another NHC championship, including Aaron Rittenhouse (12), Anderson Whipp (11), Nick Jones (11), Zach Johnson (12), Kyle Frebel (12) and Peter Rondot (11).

Although both team's performances at the conference meet may not necessarily predict the outcome of their future meets, Keefer believes their success will act as a motivating factor.

"We've seen how well we can race before we've even begun to rest and shave," Keefer said

The team's accomplishments came after an early morning practice the day of the meet. After swimming 6,000 yards, the team members were served breakfast by their parents and relaxed for an hour before to the meet.

Both the men's and women's teams faced tougher competition the following weekend when they competed against North Central and Fishers. The swimmers consider the back-to-back meets as a "state simulation". The four-hour roundtrip and overnight stay in an Indy hotel were validated by two first place finishes on Friday night. Both teams struggled against powerhouse North Central the next morning, but their performance strengthened the team's resolve for post-season competition.

"Although much of the team was disappointed by our first dual meet loss, we benefited from the meet because state is set up the same way," Aaron Rittenhouse (12) said. "Now we are looking to keep our focus in practice so we can end on a win at sectionals and a top five finish at state."

Following the conference meet, the senior swimmers bade their final farewell to competition in their home water. The eight boys and eight girls were honored at the dual Norwell-Homestead meet on Jan. 15 by dressing in nice attire and coaching their younger teammates throughout their races. Each senior was honored in a short ceremony during the event's intermission where they were introduced and escorted by their parents in front of the crowd.

"Swimming has been a huge part of my life and it is going to be hard to be done with it, but I'm still really excited to finish the year strong and hopefully make it to state," Veenstra said.

As they enter the competitive post season, the team is increasing its bonding activities and tweaking their training routines in anticipation of the upcoming sectional meet. Keefer captured the opinions of many of her fellow teammates when she proclaimed the week leading up to sectionals as her favorite part of the swim season.

> *"To be one of the best teams in the state, we need a coach that pushes us to the limits. I come into practice and expect Chad [Englehart] to bring a hard practice... I trust his ability to coach and train me."*
>
> Tim Veenstra (12)
> Swimmer

"We hold a lot of team activities, everybody is still training, there is a lot of good food, the energy level on the team is unbelievable," Keefer said. "And we are finally allowed to shave which is great!"

Witham agrees, citing the "taper" period as her second favorite time during the season.

"It's great because we have shorter practices, more team activities and we start to feel good in the water," Witham said. "Taper also means that sectionals and state are right around the corner–which means it's time to swim fast."

As for the distinctive pink dye students might notice streaking through the hair of some classmates, Keefer dismisses the style as "part tradition, but mostly a fun and unique way to bond and unify ourselves even more as a team before a big meet."

The sectional traditions also include decorating t-shirts, wearing matching clothes on the day of prelims, exchanging small gifts before school as well as dying the ends of their hair pink.

Stepping Up

Boys continue to mature with unexpected leadership, NHC battle tonight against DeKalb

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

A recent hot streak and a bit of luck have the Spartans sitting in first place of the Northeast Hoosier Conference. One team goal set at the beginning of the year, to win conference, is now becoming a possibility.

Before school closed for the winter break, the team went into a very hostile environment in Huntington North. The Spartans came out with a close victory. Since the game against the Vikings, the Spartans are 5-2. During break, the team claimed the Columbia City Shootout title, beating Heritage and Leo respectively.

The Spartans jumped out early on the Heritage Patriots, outscoring them 13-6 in each of the first three quarters. Chris Ray (11) led the team in scoring with 20 points and Jacob Weide (12) added ten.

In the championship game, the Spartans went up by 11 at halftime and never looked back, winning the game by nine. Weide scored 21 in the effort while Ray scored 19 with 16 in the second half.

"Winning the tournament and even the win against Huntington North really got our team going," said coach Chris Johnson. "Our kids are playing very tough and very well lately."

On back-to-back days the team hosted Concordia and East Noble. The Spartans came out flat and had trouble rebounding and with turnovers in a loss to the Cadets.

That next day, the Spartans picked up their first conference win of the season against a tough East Noble team. Known for their tactics of holding the ball and slowing down the game, the game was close throughout. Leading by two at the break, the third quarter was a low-scoring affair for both teams with East Noble scoring two more points than the Spartans to tie the game heading into the final frame. After the Knights took a five point lead with less than four minutes to go, the Spartans got hot from three-point land with two big shots by Ray and Logan Bultemeier (12). With less than a minute to go and the score tied at 35, Weide hit a layup and was fouled on the way up. After completing the three-point play, the Knights made a final desperate attempt to tie the game, but came up unsuccessful.

When the Spartans traveled to Columbia City to take on the hometown Eagles, they knew they were going into a very hostile environment. However, the varsity team was not bothered by this fact. After trailing by five early in the game, Desmon Powers (10) sparked life into the Spartans with a vicious one-hand slam. The rejuvenated Spartans then went into a suffocating 1-3-1 zone defense which eventually led to the team going up by as many as 14 going into the fourth quarter. Despite the lead, the Eagles lit up from behind the arc and tied they tied the game with 27 seconds left to play. After a timeout, the Spartans ran a play to perfection as David Osborn (12) hit a lay up with 1.1 seconds left to put the Spartans up for good. The win over Columbia City boosted the teams' conference record to 2-1.

"The Columbia City game was one of the most exciting games I have ever witnessed," Albert Jennings (10) said. "Although we almost let them back in the game, the crowd and the intensity of the game was awesome. Maybe it was better that our opponents made a run at us - we learned that we can win a close game even in an unfriendly environment."

> *"Winning the [Columbia City] tournament and even the win against Huntington North really got our team going. Our kids are playings very tough and very well lately."*
>
> **Chris Johnson**
> Boys Varsity Head Coach

Against North Side, the Redskins used their quickness and full court press to bother the Spartans throughout the game. After a back and forth battle between the two teams, the game eventually went into overtime. The host team, however, were not able to pull through in the extra period. The Spartans lost the game 75-68, putting their record against the Summit Athletic Conference at 0-5. Weide led the team with 30 points in the losing effort.

But like they have done all season, the Spartans rebounded from the loss with a win over Bellmont on January 19.

Chase Sanders (12) led the balanced attack with 19 points as the Spartans dismantled the Braves 71-58. Three other players scored in double figures to add to the lead against their undersized opponents. With this being a conference game, the boys needed this win to stay in the NHC title hunt.

"We know we have to win every conference game from here on out to win the conference championship, which is one of our goals," Jennings said. "That knowledge motivates us each day during practice and each time we take the court for a game."

Tonight, the Spartans travel to Dekalb High School to face the Barons. At 3-1 in conference play, the Spartans and Barons each need this win for a chance at the NHC title. If the team prevails, it will give the current players their first conference title as a part of the Spartan basketball program.

Although tonight's contest will be played at DeKalb, Weide and company are counting on a sizeable student following to travel to the game. Based on the encouragingly large Spartan representation at the Columbia City game, a good turnout is not as unlikely as the distance would suggest.

"Our student section at home games doesn't always reflect how fun it is to watch these guys play." Kendy Osborn (11), younger sister of point guard D. Osborn and avid fan, said, "My friends and I love coming to all of their games with our homemade signs and chants. This team displays so much emotion and has so much chemistry that it is hard not to get into the game with them."

Has sponsorship gone too far in athletics?

Ray examines the increasing role businesses, corporations play in the sports arena

By Chris Ray
Sports Editor

As I was soaking in the NFL games over the weekend, I came to realize a few things:

1) The Colts actually lost to a Chargers team without Ladanian Tomlinson and Philip Rivers.

2) Nobody is going to beat the Patriots, even though I'll be cheering for Eli Manning and company.

3) Naming rights and sponsorship rights in sports these days are absolutely ridiculous.

If you don't know what I'm talking about with the sponsorship rights in sports, hear me out.

Have you ever noticed how many different things in sports are sponsored by random companies? Sports stadiums and arenas are the most popular form of sponsorship rights. Professional teams sell the naming rights to their stadiums for unworldly prices. For example, Ford Motor Company pays the Detroit Lions $1 million per year to name the stadium Ford Field until 2042. American Airlines has naming rights for two NBA stadiums, the American Airlines Arena in Miami and the American Airlines Center in Dallas. FedEx currently pays $7.6 million a year to the Washington Redskins and $4.5 million a year to the Memphis Grizzlies for stadium naming rights. In Boston, the TD Banknorth Garden (the current name) has had a total of 34 different names since it was built in 1993. While the stadium was trying to find a long-term naming rights deal, Delaware North Companies auctioned daily naming rights on eBay. From Feb. 10 to Mar. 13, 2005, the arena had a different name about every day. It was even called the Yankees Suck Center for two days.

It doesn't stop there. Companies have paid for naming rights on some ludicrous things. Some have paid for naming rights for days of the week in which college basketball games are played, such as Big Monday presented by Bud Light, Super Tuesday presented by Lexus, ACC Wednesday presented by Staples and Throwdown Thursday presented by IBM. Many different college football bowl games have naming rights, such as the GMAC Bowl, Bell Helicopters Armed Forces Bowl, Gaylord Hotels Music City Bowl and the Rose Bowl presented by Citi. When the name of the bowl takes people 37 seconds to say, I think there may be a problem.

Even the first down line seen on televised football games is brought to you by Xerox. I mean, seriously.

After all is said and done, I have one question for these companies. Do these naming rights really help their business? I mean, are there studies that I am unaware of that show increased Xerox sales due to the fact that people saw they sponsor the first down line? Do people think, "You know, I think I'm going to stay in the Gaylord Hotel chain because my team played in the Gaylord Hotels Music City Bowl." It just gets absolutely insane and rather annoying after a while.

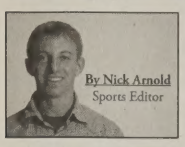
Whatever happened to the stadiums that were named for a team owner or a city monument? If you think about it, the most popular stadiums and arenas in sports are not sponsored by a big-name company. Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Yankee Stadium in New York and Fenway Park in Boston are all well-known facilities without a well-known sponsor. These stadiums are filled with history and stories. They carry a certain lore with them. People wait all their lives to see one game in these stadiums, just to experience the excitement that comes with these stadiums.

In the end, sports fans are not going to remember the name on the outside of the stadium, but the names of the teams and players that played within the stadium.

SPONSORED NAMES

- American Airlines Arena
- GMAC Bowl
- Ford Field
- TD Banknorth Garden
- Xerox First Down
- "Super Tuesday" by Lexus

Colts' fans learn lesson in defeat after recent loss



By Nick Arnold
Sports Editor

As the L.E.D. bulbs adorning the scoreboard in the RCA Dome ticked their final seconds, fans throughout Indiana felt that gut-wrenching, but now familiar feeling. As they are accustomed, another Indiana professional sports team had its heart broken. The Indianapolis Colts, defending Super Bowl Champions, had fallen to the underrated San Diego Chargers.

Predictions had played a large role in the hype surrounding the game. But as we all know, predictions have an ironic mirror-like nature. The Colts were by far the predicted favorite. With Super Bowl rings adorning their knuckles and a strong regular season, hardly anyone bet against them. Yet, the Colts learned predictions only deal with the past and the future. They neglect the most important time frame, the present.

Realizing predictions had no effect on their play, the Chargers focused on winning the football game, something they eventually accomplished. After two predictable kneels, the Chargers exploded from the sidelines euphorically. Defying predictions, they had just eliminated the reigning national champions. Colts fans stared in disbelief as Tony Dungy met Norv Turner midfield for the conciliatory handshake. It was not Dungy, however, who was giving the accustomed conciliation, but receiving it instead.

The loss closed a chapter in Indiana sports history. Having played their final game in the RCA Dome, the Colts will move to the state-of-the-art Lucas Oil Stadium next fall. But it was a bittersweet farewell to the famous facility that had given rise to historic occasions. Colts fans will never forget last year's AFC championship game, in which a home-town crowd witnessed one of the greatest comebacks in NFL history. No such thrilling victory has occurred in the RCA Dome since then, and none ever will.

But the Colts' loss did not occur in an embarrassing fashion. The passion with which each team played was truly remarkable. Chargers's star running-back, LaDainian Tomlinson, hyper extended his left-knee in the first half and did not even return to the game. Quarterback Philip Rivers sprained his MCL late in the third quarter.

Though the physical toll taken on each team was notable, the strongest passion could be found in thousands of Colts fans present at the game. Adorning the RCA Dome in a sea of blue and white, 56,950 individuals screamed at the top of their lungs in a show of support for their team. Announcers covering the game found it difficult to communicate without shouting through the airwaves. These fans' passion, an unwavering commitment to their team is just as important as a star-studded roster. But as last Sunday would prove, sometimes it is simply not enough.

Though the Colts and their fans find themselves reeling from defeat, they cannot ignore the passion that has enabled them to come so far. Just ten years ago, would any fan honestly believe the Colts would hoist the Lombardi trophy in the coming decade? Once at the bottom of the NFL, the Colts have become one of the NFL's great success stories.

Indiana fans must look past this year's athletic shortfalls and towards the intangible attributes that make the Colts unique. Unlike some teams, the Colts are virtually free from scandalous activity on and off the field. Peyton Manning, with his genuine nature, serves as the benign figurehead of the team, and in many cases, the entire league.

But there is no greater attribute to the Colts than Tony Dungy. In the midst of an event that leads many parents to break down, Dungy maintained that inner strength that pervades throughout his life. One never finds Dungy denouncing other teams, players, or coaches. Like a true gentleman, he quietly paces the sidelines of every game, orchestrating one of the greatest teams in the NFL. Colts fans only need to look to Dungy for proof that their support is worth-while. He embodies the principles of sportsmanship.

So, yet again, we as Indiana fans find ourselves at the end of a season. But we are faced with a choice. Do we look at the season as a let down because the Colts failed to repeat their historical performance? Or do we look to the more important successes of the Colts franchise, those that truly matter in the long run?

With a deep sense of optimism, we turn our minds to a new era in Colts history. Putting the past behind us, we focus on the age-old promise next season holds. Casting pessimism aside, we must continue our support of one of the great professional sports teams today. We must, as the many horseshoe-clad signs throughout our state suggest - believe.

PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER

Recreational soccer teams conclude season at Dome

Top: Pumas coach, Mark Cox (12), and captain, Amy Young (12), discuss strategy. Above: Sam Scarengelli (10) leans in to instruct Teresa Busse (9). Bottom: Pumas teammembers prepare to play in the championship qualifying round vs the Moldy Chickens.

By Andrew Weiss
Writer

Once a sport has ended for the year, few athletes keep playing. However, this is not the case for soccer teams the Moldy Chickens and the Pumas, both which have teams at the Fort Wayne Area Dome during the winter.

The six on six league at the Dome consists of ten teams, each team plays nine games plus an end of the season playoff and playing each team once during the regular season. Along with the two teams from Homestead, there are two from Norwell and two from Heritage.

The Pumas are entirely composed of Homestead students, like the Moldy Chickens , with the exception of their goalie, who attends Carroll. The Pumas have four players from the Homestead Girls' Soccer team: Kari Gotschall (12), Jenny Green (11), Teresa Busse (9) and Sam Scaringelli (10). The Moldy Chickens have three from the team, Kara Busse (11), Shannon Collins (12) and Kyndra Wible (12.)

> *"This year the game was intense with a lot of fouling..."*
>
> **Kari Gotschall (12)**
> Pumas player

While some players play on the teams to improve for high school athletics, others play for vaying reasons.

"Each person on this team has a different reason for playing," Scaringelli, keeper for the Pumas, said. "All of us do it for fun, some do it to stay in shape, and some do it to pass time quicker. I do it because it's a fun team, we have some good times and I can let loose and try new moves that I can't try playing for Homestead."

Unlike traditional indoor leagues, the field does not have walls that keep the ball in play at all times. Soccer coaches frown upon indoor soccer with walls because it creates lazy habits when players go to outdoor games.

"I like indoor soccer without walls because it's more realistic, but walls are good too because we can play [the ball] off [of] them," Wible (12) said.

"Its pretty cool to see people from other schools out there, I know some of the people from other schools because of travel soccer," Pumas captain, Amy Young (12) said. "The schools can get really competitive against each other."

In the regular season's only meeting between the Moldy Chickens and the Pumas, the Chickens emerged victorious.

"Even though I'm not that close with the players on the [Pumas], it was still fun playing against other Homestead girls," Wible said.

"This year the game was intense with a lot of fouling," Gotschall said. "There's a lot of trash talking that goes on when we play them and even after [the game]."

The Pumas finished third in the regular season while the Chickens took the title. During the playoffs, the two teams met in the semifinals with the chance to go to the championship. The Pumas defeated the Chickens 1-0 with a goal from Jenny Green (11). The Pumas then went on to defeat Norwell's top team to win the championship.

While the facility both teams play in is unique, the players agree it lends itself to high quality athletics. After transitioning from a indoor golf facility, the Dome now focuses on indoor sports such as soccer and football.

"The Dome is a really nice play to play soccer," Young said. "You wouldn't think that an indoor golf place would have such nice soccer facilities, but they're really in great shape."

How do student athletes fit in?	Favorite sports memory of 2007?	Mac or Windows?	Game day superstitions?	Favorite kind of music?	Favorite lunch item?
Brad Mills (9) **Wrestling**	Mitchell Report	Windows	None	Rap	Cappuccino ice cream cone
Kendra Dyson (10) **Basketball**	Beating Leo at the buzzer	Windows	Eat a Snickers candy bar	Rap	Monday tacos
Melissa King (11) **Cheerleading**	Cheering at State	Windows	Praying with the squad	Rock	Breadsticks with cheese
David Osborn (12) **Basketball**	Colts Superbowl Win	Windows	Watch/Listen to the 2007 One Shining Moment	Anything good and clean: rap, country, gospel	Mint ice cream cup with warm cookies

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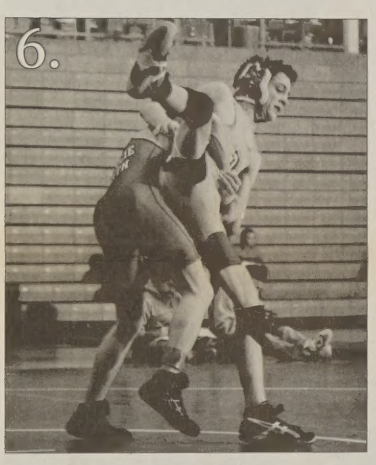
SECTIONAL BOUND

WRESTLING TEAM



By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

The varsity wrestling team has turned around what seemed like a doubtful season with strong showings at the NHC Conference Tournament and the Concordia Invitational. After the return of seniors, and good performances from the underclassmen, the wrestling team shows better prospects.

"Third place in some sports might not sound that much, but given the strength of our conference, and all the teams there were really good." Coach Pursley said. "It was a good showing, there were no easy matches, it was a long day."

The varsity team placed third in the NHC conference, the best the team has ever placed at conference. Andy Franklin (10) and Justin Wight (12), the two team champions, showed the full range of experience that the team has. Along with these two, the team had a single second place finisher and three third place finishers. The only weight classes that did not have a varsity wrestler place were the 160 and 140 classes. Franklin won his final match by a 9-0 victory over a DeKalb wrestler to win the 103 weight class.

Wight defeated Austin Egolf of Columbia City to win the 130 weight class. Egolf was projected to win by many coaches, as he had been undefeated. However, Wight was able to defeat him in a victory of 14-11.

The wrestlers that started on varsity at conference included six seniors, four juniors and four underclassmen. The team also showed growth by beating East Noble at the conference tournament. Previously, the varsity wrestlers had lost to East Noble in a dual match 37-35. The varsity wrestlers came into the NHC conference meet pumped up from their first place finish at the Concordia Invitational.

"We looked at Concordia as a spring board that lead us," Franklin said. "We did well there and we continued to do well at conference. We had twelve out of fourteen guys place and that was really a good performance."

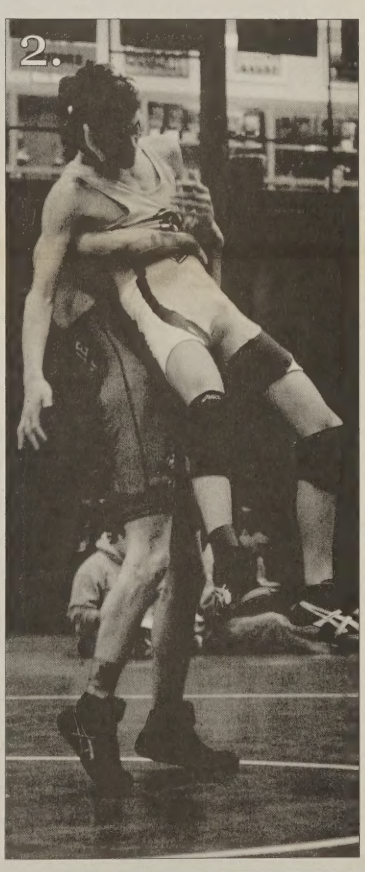
The team's champions at the Concordia Invitational were three of the teams' most dominant seniors. Wight, Andrew Fahlsing (12) and Jason Simpson (12) were able to win all their matches at the Concordia Invitational. Fahlsing returned after a back injury, and has been able to contribute to the team's performance.

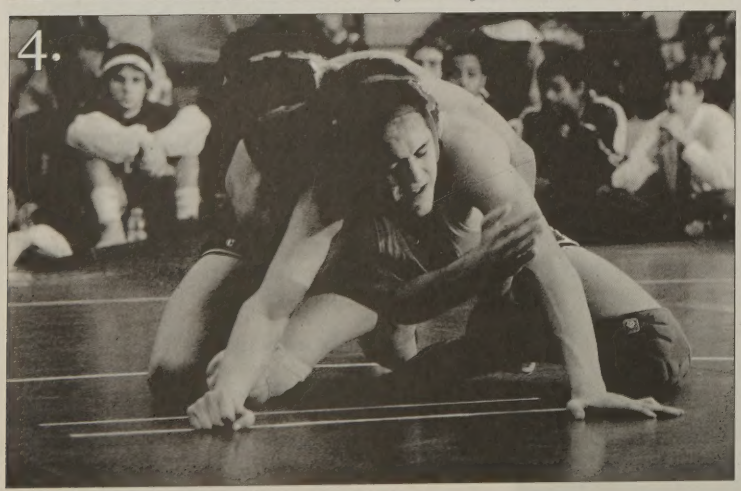
"For the most part we are where we are going to be for the tournament," said Coach Pursley. "Kyle Luithly had a couple of injuries this year, and only wrestled in one match. Other than that we have most of our guys back."

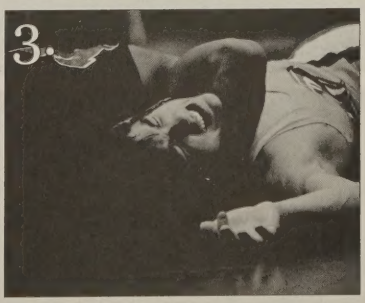
At Concordia the team also had four second-place finishers, two of whom were underclassmen--Matt Carter (9) and Franklin, as well as Tucker Smith and Logan Williams (11).

"Our team can definitely qualify for regionals, and I think we have the ability to get out of team regionals if we wrestle like we did at Concordia and Conference," Franklin said. "I am aiming for state, that's my goal for this year."

After a first place finish at Concordia and a third place finish in conference, the varsity wrestling squad has been preparing for tomorrow's sectionals. Last year was the first time the team was able to qualify for team regionals. The team hopes to qualify for regionals once again and several individuals hope to do the same.







1. Trent Wilburn (12) grapples with a Viking opponent at the conference meet. Wilburn placed thirdat conference.
2. Andy Franklin (10) is lifted off the ground during a match.
3. Tucker Smith (10) is pinned and attempts to escape.
4. Justin Wright (12) formulates an escape plan during one of his matches. Wight went on to win first place at conference.
5. Matt Carter (9) escapes from his opponent and gets back up on his feet.
6. Andy Franklin (10) performs some acrobatics while wrestling. Franklin, along with Justin Wight, was a conference champion.

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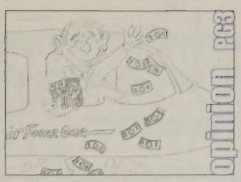

Friday, February 15, 2008

PHOTO NIIC

The Northeast Indiana Innovation Center is located on Stellhorn Road. It offers services and aid in marketing, managment, business growth, and planning.

Young entrepreneurs seek advice at Northeast Indiana Innovation Center

By Celia Grundman
Writer

Many high school students are interested in starting their own companies, and the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center (NIIC) can help these students achieve their goals.

"It went from joking around to making money," Patrick Ryan (10) said of Scisswear, the T-shirt business he works for along with Brandon Chaffee (12); the company is owned by Richard Boyne (12) and Jeremy Dingman.

"It's like a part-time job… it takes up about as much time as schoolwork so it's not too bad. It's kind of a side business. I work on graphic design, marketing, and production," Ryan said.

Research shows that many high school students are interested in entrepreneurship; while over 70% of high school students think of starting their own business, only 5% of adults do.

"Early starts are great. I would encourage students with a well-thought out plan who understand the time commitment to start their own business," Kent Mitchell, business teacher, said.

NIIC can help such people. A non-profit company that is in business to help grow small companies in the Northeast Indiana Region, NIIC offers many opportunities for high school students. Its staff is made up of entrepreneurs who educate people on the world of business to turn ideas into reality.

"What is unique for high school students is the office space we offer in our student incubator. Student entrepreneurs have different needs than the stereotypical entrepreneur and we believe we can serve those needs," Marion Hutchison, a NIIC employee, said.

Since students may lack the funds to become a client and to receive coaching and office space, NIIC makes scholarships available for student entrepreneurs which can provide full or partial payments.

In addition to becoming a client, students can apply for an internship as NIIC sometimes hires

SEE INNOVATION on page 2A

INFORMATION

If you have a bright idea, you can contact Northeast Indiana Innovation Center and they can help you set up your small business.

Northeast Indiana Innovation Center
3201 Stellhorn Road
Fort Wayne, IN 46815

Phone: (260) 407 6462
E-mail: rwright@niic.net

For more information, visit www.niic.net. Learn about NIIC's services, facilities, clients, and events. You can also browse through their picture gallery, take a virtual tour, read about their achievments, and apply online for their programs.

BRIEFS

VARIETY SHOW
Auditions for the variety show will take place on Feb. 21 and Feb. 22. The Variety Show will take place on Mar. 13 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Tickets are $5. Contact Erin Quinn (12) or Greg Kyes (12) for more information.

ORCHESTRA CONCERT
Orchestra will be having a concert in the Homestead auditorium on Feb. 26. Fort Wayne Philharmonic members will also play at the concert. The concert will from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and admission is free of charge.

SPEECH TEAM MEETINGS
The Speech Team meets Tuesdays in the afternoon, while debate team meets Thursdays in the afternoon. Individual members from both teams meet on various days.

EARTHFEST
Bands interested in performing in Earthfest should provide CD submissions for an audition. All audition tapes should be given to Naomi Killham or dropped off in room 531 as soon as possible. All students can submit possible t-shirt designs to room 531. The deadline for t-shirt designs is Feb. 22. Earthfest this year will be held on May 1.

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Resource room contributes to high graduation rates

By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

Blue caps and gowns as far as the eye can see, flashing cameras and 90 degree weather. These are the usual circumstances of a Homestead graduation ceremony, but as second semester commenced, that was the farthest thing from anyone's mind.

State officials released statewide statistics in early January detailing graduation rates throughout the state.

With 496 possible four year graduates in the senior class last year, 451 senior Spartans graduated. This is a 90.9 percent graduation rate, impressive statewide, but actually a 1.6 percent decrease from two years ago.

According to the *News-Sentinel*, Homestead is well above the state average of 76.5 percent.

"I think that Homestead academics are stronger than most programs in this area," Sarah Antrobus (12) said. "A wide range of opportunities in different areas allow each student to become strong in the subject of their choice."

With such strong graduation rates, it is no surprise that academics are a top priority.

"The number of students in AP is up, which is good," Jan Venderly, English teacher, said. "Our academic standards are very, very high here at Homestead."

While the standards are high, they are not unreachable for most students.

In the first semester of the 2007-2008 school year, 1,854 students were enrolled in a math class. Out of those students, 186 failed, making the fail rate 10 percent.

SEE RATES on page 2A

SACTA
SOUTHWEST ALLEN COUNTY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Teachers negotiate new contracts

By Ashley Heath
Writer

With the annual expiration of our district's teachers' contracts last fall, negotiations are now taking place to improve current conditions. Although stress and conflict typically accompany each year's discussion, this year's negotiations seem to be especially intense.

Much of the tension originates from fiscal issues. As most of the funding comes from the state, changes in appropriations at the state level require administrators to make adjustments in employee contracts.

Mike Schmid, an art teacher and Negotiations Chair of the four teachers on the bargaining team, summarizes the polemic as a power struggle.

"We would like to see teachers having more say in how things are run in the school and administrators want to have the sole voice in making decisions," Schmid said.

More specifically, the highest priorities on the teachers' agenda are seniority transfers, equal salaries for department heads, reasonable leniencies with traveling teachers, and binding arbitration as the primary means for conflict resolution regarding contracts.

According to those advocating binding arbitration, the current process for filing grievances or disputing rulings is both ineffective and unfair, with the final decision ultimately in the hands of the school board. Arbitration would involve an unbiased third party to listen to and rule over the dispute.

Another problem comes with the treatment of part-time and traveling teachers. Current complaints include not allowing them enough preparation time, which they believe is crucial to their effectiveness in the classroom.

Teachers also hope to attain equal base salaries for department heads. According to Schmid, there are currently four department heads who earn half the salary stipend as other department heads, despite their attendance at all the same meetings.

In addition, teachers want their length of service to influence their chances of attaining other desired positions.

"[We want] seniority [to] be the major factor in a teacher's ability to transfer into a position that becomes vacant," Homestead counselor and member of the bargaining team Diane Rice said.

Teachers may wear red shirts every Monday morning to bring attention to the issue. However, Schmid claims it is not an act of criticism.

"They are not protesting anything," Schmid said. "The teachers are wearing red shirts to show that we are a united people, that we're members of the Teacher's Association and that we support one another."

Although the contract being negotiated only applies directly to teachers, many of the

SEE CONTRACT on page 2A

Proposed "cut and cap" plan could damage district budget

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

A pending bill proposed by the Indiana House of Representatives could backtrack progress made by a referendum fund benefiting Southwest Allen County Schools five years ago, according to Superintendent Brian Smith.

If the bill were to be passed, the district would lose $5 million by the end of 2010, or the financial equivalent of 10 full-time teachers. The potential loss of teachers could also cause increased class sizes and endanger elective options valued by students.

"I think having the electives we have allows us to be a lot more creative," Ross Kibby (10) said. "A lot of kids might not know what they want to do after high school, and those types of classes help them decide."

House Bill 1001 provides for a "circuit-breaker" law that would place a 1% property tax cap on homeowners, including those recently affected by the annexation of the city of Fort Wayne. The bill also calls for an amendment to the state constitution that would guarantee permanent enactment of the circuit-breaker.

Such legislature would mar the significance of a referendum fund approved by taxpayers in 2003. The referendum allowed SACS to lower

SEE BUDGET on page 2A

Weighted grades council meets monthly to discuss implications

By Katherine DeRosa
News Editor

With the increased competition for college admittance, students will do whatever they can to improve their applications. They obviously present themselves in the most appealing way, highlighting their strengths and concealing their weaknesses. However, when it comes to the current grading scale, some student (mainly honors students) feel they are penalized for challenging themselves. A recently formed weighted grades committee has been formed and the topic is up once again for debate.

In 1990 a committee was formed to determine whether a weighted grading system would be used at Homestead and the decision was made not to weight grades. The non-weighted system has been in place ever since. However, a weighted grades committee has recently been formed to re-visit the issue. Anyone interested in joining is encouraged to contact Amy Hamilton, a guidance counselor who will head the group. The weighted grades committee plans to meet once a month for the rest of the academic year.

Hamilton feels that with a lack of weighted grades, students are missing specified grade point average (GPA) cutoffs set for merit based scholarships.

"I don't want to see students penalized for scholarships if schools are using the GPA we give them to base merit based awards on," Hamilton said.

Both Indiana and Purdue University provide such merit-based scholarships.

"I feel that we should be rewarded for taking more challenging classes," Mikel Buchanan (10) said. "By not weighting grades, the school is encouraging mediocrity."

Although Mike Donnel (12) has taken advanced courses, he agrees with Buchanan.

"I know I would have taken more AP/Honors classes if they were weighted," Donnell said.

Emily Aeschliman (12) feels that the current non-weighted system puts students who challenge themselves at a disadvantage.

"By not weighting grades they're trying to give kids who aren't as smart an advantage in order to make everyone's grades more equal. Say you're running a race. You don't give slower kids a head start just because they're slower in order to make everyone finish more equally- you reward those who are faster," Aeschliman

SEE GRADES on page 2A

CONTRACT Cont. from page 1A

changes made will affect other staff members as well.

"Even though the teachers do the negotiating for salary, the other groups that are associated tend to get the same raise that we get - that includes principals," Schmid said.

In addition to salary, the contract defines particulars concerning the number of sick days a teacher can take, preparation time, retirement information, working conditions, medical insurance, extracurricular activities and many more necessary details.

All negotiated changes will be retroactive, in that the changes will be effective as of the first of this school year. Salary compensations will be paid and other changes will take immediate effect.

Before a final decision can be reached though, both parties, having obtained approval from their constituents, must ratify the changes.

"Southwest Allen County Schools is an amazing school system and the teachers here are very aware of just how fortunate they are that they work here," Schmid said. "We just would like to see everyone treated fairly and equitably and we want everyone to show respect for everyone else."

Schmid and Rice note that while a compromise is close at hand on certain issues, the administrator's non-negotiating stance on binding arbitration and seniority transfers suggest that a final agreement is not as imminent.

Student Government, with the help of Aboite New Trails, is starting a district-wide project to build a memorial to commemorate students who have passed away while they were attending a Southwest Allen County Schools. The memorial will be a garden and bench area along the Aboite Trails with a labeled brick for each fallen student. This project will cost $25,000 dollars to complete, and Student Government needs monetary donations from community members in order to reach their goal. To contact HHS Student Government about donating to the memorial, call them at (260) 431-2942 or e-mail them at hhsstugov@sacs.k12.in.us.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

INNOVATION Cont. from page 1A

high school students.

"Internships are a great way to check out whether the entrepreneurial environment is for you. We do have a limited number of year round or summer internships available," Hutchison said.

Furthermore, the company offers various programs for students throughout the year. NIIC's upcoming program is the Youth Entrepreneurship Symposium (YES). Sponsored and hosted by NIIC and the University of Saint Francis, this event takes place on Thursday, April 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in Saint Francis' Rowland Center.

The goal of YES is to help students interested in entrepreneurship achieve their goals. Besides attending a full day of workshops and other activities, YES participants will be competing for a spot in a 12 month Youth Business "Boot Camp" where "they will actually develop and launch a new business venture based on their own ideas."

NIIC encourages bright and motivated students to attend, but they can only accept ten students from each high school. For more information, students should contact Remound Wright at 260-407-6462 or through email at rwright@niic.net.

"Students are always welcome to visit NIIC and talk to us," Hutchison said.

High school students may have business interests for after high school, but there are many possibilities for students who wish to start their business career during their school years.

"I think anything in lawn service, during summer, or anything with computers that you can do on your own would be best," Mitchell said.

"Entrepreneurship, marketing, and business foundations are good classes to take. They've helped me the most," Richard Boyne (12) said.

Whether preparing for a business after school or for one during, students enthusiastic about their entrepreneurial careers can receive great assistance from NIIC.

"If you think you can succeed [in business], go for it and do as much as you can," Ryan (10) said.

RATES Cont. from page 1A

While passing rates were high in mathematics, students enrolled in science courses had an even better percentage. Of the 1816 enrolled, 80 failed, making a 4.4 percent fail rate.

For those who have failed or are currently struggling in a class, there are many options to help bring your grade back up.

Homestead has three resource rooms, separated into science, math and English/social studies, each offering a number of services.

"[The resource rooms] offer make-up tests so the student is supervised," Venderly said. "There are teachers to give feedback and answer questions. If a student's been absent, the teacher can simulate in class work. The resource room is basically a guided study hall to get caught up."

Getting to the resource room is not a difficult process if you know how to do it.

"Your teacher for the class you need help in writes you a pass for the right resource room for any period of the day," T.J. McCombs, math teacher, said.

While it may be difficult for students without a study hall to make time for the resource room, teachers urge students to use it whenever possible.

"It's a place to go to be successful," McCombs said. "It's a place to get help right now, it's a priority for teachers and it benefits everyone."

Another option students might take advantage of is National Honors Society tutoring which takes place in the library after school on scheduled days.

While tutoring is an extra way to learn the school material, asking your teacher for help is always an option.

"My colleagues are outstanding professionals," Venderly said. "They are outstanding teachers."

BUDGET Cont. from page 1A

class sizes, reinstate programs, and keep class offerings amongst other district improvements.

Smith, who believes the bill could have a "kind of Robin Hood effect," testified against it at the state's capital on Tuesday, February 5. He has testified in the past at a House Ways and Means Committee hearing held in Fort Wayne.

"I'm optimistic about the referendum issue," Smith said, "but not as optimistic about the $5 million we could lose."

Despite his confidence, Smith believes he must reevaluate the issue if his voice is not heard. In the case that he does not convince the House to drop the bill, Smith would have to turn to the community to support his cause.

Still, the superintendent of a growing district (SACS has increased by nearly 135 students this school year) continues to stress a bigger picture.

He believes such a move by the state government could take power away from the public institutions that rely on tax dollars -- libraries and schools.

PHOTO BY MARGARET BAUER

Dr. Smith fought against the new "cut and cap" plan in Indy.

"If I had one focus, it would be that local control needs to be maintained," Smith said. "We don't need Indianapolis to control us."

Thursday, March 13 from 7 pm to 9 pm
tickets $5

GRADES Cont. from page 1A

said.

However, the committee was not formed to defend weighted grades.

"Our goal is to look at the pros and cons of the weighting of grades," Hamilton said. "If it doesn't adversely affect those non AP/Honors kids we could consider [making] a recommendation to the board."

The board will keep all Homestead students in mind when determining their decision regarding weighted grades. Hamilton herself isn't set for one side or the other.

"I go back and forth because I want to make sure both students are represented," Hamilton said.

Where there are advantages for honors students, a weighted grade system sometimes seems unfair to students who only take regular classes. They worry that their class rank could drop as their competition is given an edge over them. However, Luke Baker (11) credits himself with being an average-joe, but isn't worried about weighting grades.

"It makes sense that if you're in a harder class, the subject matter is harder and a few extra points are deserved,"Baker (11) said. "There are a lot of people every year that get into college that aren't AP. I don't really think about [my] placement, I'm just worried about getting A's and getting out of school"

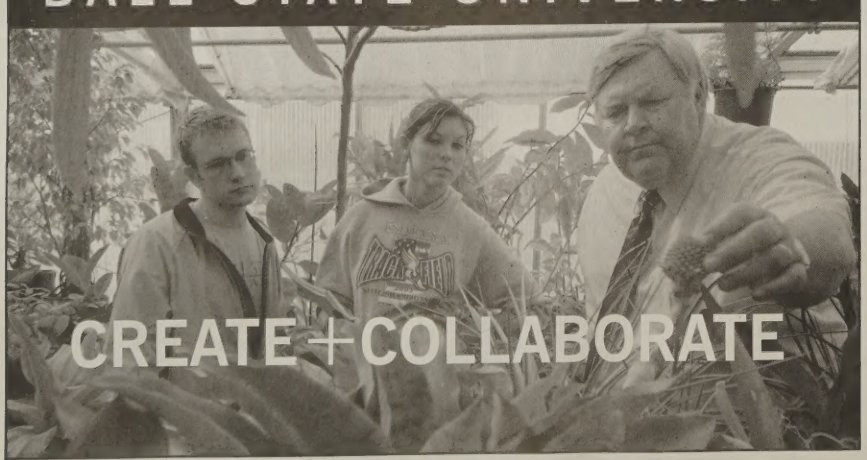
Even if Homestead does adopt a weighted grades policy, there will never be complete equality from school to school. Nearly every other school in the Fort Wayne area weights grades, but there are differentiations among their specific systems.

"Every school weights grades differently so there will never be equality across the board from Homestead's GPA to Carmel's GPA. So if our goal is to try to make everything equal, we never will," Hamilton said.

She feels that even if all schools instilled the exact same grading system, teachers will always teach differently, which will yield different results at other schools

"I still don't think there is going to be parody form one school to the next. But if it boosts our kids individual GPAs when it comes time for scholarships it might be worth it," Hamilton said.

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY



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Opinion

Who do you like in the Presidential Election?
Cut it out. Fill it out. Turn it in to room 620.

- Barack Obama
- Hillary Clinton
- John McCain
- Mike Huckabee

Friday, February 15, 2008

Economic Stimulus Plan

Bush's plan 'step in the right direction'

By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

In 1995 the Gross Domestic Product in United States was 5.4 billion; by 2007, this became 13.7 billion. It is obvious that the overall state of the US economy is positive. However, recent shortcomings have spread panic that the US economy will turn into a recession. The economic stimulus package has passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, and is expected to be passed by the president. The goal of this package is not to promote long term growth but in the short run to reduce the fear in the American public.

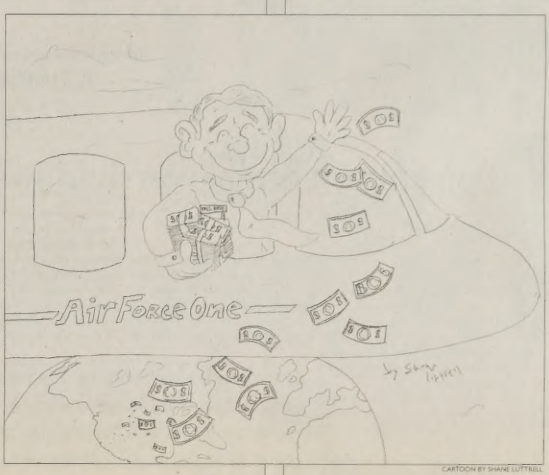
The housing market is one of the leading causes for panic in the United States. 2007 experienced a sharp rise in foreclosures due to years of high risk home loaners. The property value is rising faster than incomes causing a high supply of houses with only a few able to afford them. Current homeowners then become upside down on their home loans because the value of their property has declined from when they bought it. The housing bubble that has been building for the last decade has popped.

This problem in the housing market most effects the mid to low economic classes. Those earning fewer than $75,000 can not afford homes; however, many families that earn more than $75,000 seem to be the ones affected by high interest. Due to this very problem the government cut the federal interest twice by .5 percent; however, such actions do not provide the immediate relief of the economic stimulus package.

Another problem that the economic stimulus package is aims to suppress is the reduced spending from panic over the recent drop in the stock market. Last Tuesday, the Dow Jones Average fell 370 points in one day. This drop seems significant for two reasons. The last drop of such magnitude was Aug. 9, 2007. Furthermore, this drop for the first time since March of 2003 came in the service sector. This drop in the stock market has caused panic throughout the United States causing the wallets of American families to further tighten

The economic stimulus package provides help to those most hurt by recent short comings of the US economy. It is a tax rebate providing $300 to $600 for those earning between $3,000 and $75,000 plus a sum per child. This bill is not restricted; however, to just the lowest of the income brackets. The tax deduction offered to middle class home owners has become insufficient in compensation for the poor housing market. The families earning between $75,000 and $150,000 will receive the greatest benefit of the economic stimulus package, $1,200. These checks will most likely come out in May but could extend into June depending on how fast President Bush signs off. This tax relief will increase consumerism and promote Americans to spend the money that they have saved in fear of recent economic downturns.

This stimulus plan does not promise long term growth, or a complete resolution to the emerging problem. However, it is the necessary consolation for low income families. Furthermore, the plan is not the action of just one party; in fact, both parties advocate the plan. For the most part bills that are so widely accepted seem to be the correct step. This bill is a step in the right direction for keeping the economy stable for the American people.



CARTOON BY SHANE LUTTRELL

'Stimulus' will merely increase inflation

By Lee Farnworth
Opinion Editor

Economic recession sounds scary. The thought of our economy receding is obviously unpleasant, but recession is a natural part of the business cycle. In a free market, the economy goes through natural expansionary and recessionary cycles, but the general trend of the economy is upward. However, recession is obviously undesirable. As such, President George W. Bush has proposed an economic stimulus package to perk up the U.S. market.

The basic idea of an economic stimulus package is that it would give Americans (exactly which Americans is an issue of debate) money that they would then spend, thereby propping up the economy. The Bush proposal would give around $600 dollars to families, mostly of middle and lower incomes. But no matter the specifics of the package, an economic stimulus proposal is an ineffective way to jumpstart the economy.

One of the first problems with the proposal is that it assumes that the families who receive a stimulus package will turn around and spend the money they receive. According to many economic pundits, that simply will not happen as families are more likely to use the money for other purposes like paying off credit card debts. The economic stimulus package approaches hinges on the money that the government pours out to families being spent in the economy. Others argue that the package targets the wrong Americans. The economy might be helped more if upper-income families received the rebates, as those families are more likely to spend money on big ticket items.

Bush's package is also supposed to promote job growth and business expansion. The thought is that as people use their refund to buy more, and businesses will be encouraged to hire and increase production. But businesses aren't stupid; the notion that they will react to what they know is only a temporary upsurge in demand by adding hundreds of new jobs is naïve. Even if the rebates are used to purchase new goods, it seems unlikely that businesses will respond in any way that would indicate a long-term solution or offer the prospect of sustained growth.

In addition to concerns that the economic stimulus package will do little for the economy, the inflation possibilities that the package raises must be addressed. The money that the government gives to all of the eligible families in the U.S. is simply printed out of thin air. Simply printing new money and handing it out is extremely dangerous as it will only increase the supply of money. An increase in the supply of money will do little more than decrease the dollar's value, as there is more money to compete for goods in the marketplace; it will naturally take more money to buy things. Price inflation is a looming consequence of the proposed economic stimulus package as the supply of money is artificially raised.

Recession is a natural part of the business cycle and Americans must not overreact. The thing most needed to prop up the U.S. economy is a restoration of American confidence in our economy. When people feel like the market will be strong, they spend money and the market is strong. When people feel like the market will be weak, they don't spend money and the economy suffers. Short-term economic stimulus packages will do little to combat recession and have negative impacts on the economy by increasing inflation.

National politics enter educational arena

We, the Editorial Board, have something to say about politics. There will be no soapboxes or under-the-table dealings, just a few oversights about something that is so important to the rest of the world. We figured we should have something to say about how the Homestead community finds itself in relation to these happenings.

For example, a certain contingent of liberally swayed students have taken the initiative to begin the rumblings of founding a Students for Barack Obama chapter right here in our whitewashed concrete paradise. Teacher Shawn Harkness received an e-mail from a woman named Amy Wei, who posed an invitation to any interested students of Homestead High School.

The invitation was short, and formatted, but had something to say. She pointed out that in most presidential elections, the primary in the great state of Indiana is of minimal (if any) importance. This year will be an exception. As we are sure most of you well-informed Spartans already know, the Democratic race for the presidential nomination between Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Senator Barack Obama is closer than most couples will be at Morp in a few weeks.

To address this fact, the party affiliate is interested in trying to muster some support for her candidate, Barack Obama, here in the Hoosier state before the upcoming primary on May 6. Wei is looking to target the age group with the historically worst voter turnout, ages 18-24.

According to the U.S. Census bureau, in the 2004 presidential election, only 57 percent of said age demographic registered to vote, and of that 57 registered percent, only 46 percent turned up on election day to cast a ballot.

Wei is trying to combat these statistics head-on and by mustering support from young adults nation wide. Across the country, students have started to voice their opinions and support for the various candidates, thus creating a previously untapped resource of votes for the candidates. Here at Homestead, the Ed Board is seeing an interest spring up in a political way that has not been seen in these parts for a while. Specifically, there is a large group of students interested in taking up party correspondent Wei on her offer and putting together a Students for Barack Obama extension right amongst us.

The *Spartana* does not wish to overstep its supercilious bounds and implement any political views or seem to favor one party above another; we just wish to support our Spartan brothers and sisters in their attempts to become politically active. As mentioned above, the demographic that those of us who are of voting age represent is not seen as a significant presence to the larger voting community, but in the words of Bob Dylan, "The Times They Are A Changin." There is something in the wind, and the younger voters seem to be perking up for this election. We think our generation has good timing, considering the great importance of the upcoming election.

So, we, the Editorial Board of the *Spartana* encourage any interested parties to take part in the election. Join the Students for Barack Obama group. Or maybe you would rather make your own group in support of someone else - go ahead. Get involved. Whether it be lending your support to your favorite candidate, or choosing to remain neutral, all opinions are welcome.

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E-mail: thespartana@gmail.com

Learning to Walk the Hard Way

By Kara Hackett
Life Editor

I am a planner. I love plotting out exactly what I am going to do and where I am going to be. I even have a little book in which I write it all down to make sure that I do not forget anything or stray from my carefully planned schedule. Unfortunately, however, despite how diligently I plan my life, there always tend to be little surprises along the way. Every once in awhile, unexpected circumstances find their way onto my vigilantly charted path, changing my destination from what I expected to anything other than what I imagined.

Recently, it seems that I am not the only person to be surprised by fate. Buffalo Bills' tight end, Kevin Everett, knows all about how one small incident can completely alter one's course in life. Everett's life took an unexpected turn when he tackled Domenik Hixon in the second-half of the Bills' game against the Denver Broncos on September 9th. After a crushing head-on collision with Hixon, Everett fell face-down onto the turf, where he lay immobile for several minutes as medical personnel rushed to his aid.

Due to the severity of his spinal cord injury, Everett's chances of recovery were pronounced "bleak" and "dismal;" in fact, doctors predicted that Everett would never be able to walk again. Nevertheless, despite his negative diagnosis, Everett managed to keep his hopes high. Three days after the accident, Everett's positive attitude proved itself valid when he became capable of moving his arms and legs. As bewildered doctors began to alter their grim predictions for Everett's future, he was transferred to Memorial Hermann/TIRR (The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research) to increase his minute mobility. With support from his mother and fiancée, Wiande Moore, Everett worked vigorously in his rehabilitation sessions for at least five hours each day, relearning how to accomplish tasks that were once second-nature.

One month after his accident, Everett's hard work began to pay off as he took his first steps, a miracle that doctors once deemed impossible. However, Everett did not stop there. Two weeks later, he was able to stand without assistance, and by mid-November, Everett had made such great progress that doctors began allowing him to do his rehabilitation exercises on an outpatient basis. More hopeful than ever, doctors believe that soon Everett will be able to do his rehabilitation on his own, only stopping by the hospital for periodic checkups.

Although the story of Everett's physical recovery is incredibly inspiring, perhaps the real miracle lies in his emotional recovery. Coming to terms with the fact that he will never be able to play football again, Everett has begun to explore his career options. Maintaining the positive thoughts that led to his success in rehabilitation, Everett is considering a career in coaching. He also hopes to open a restaurant one day; however, currently, Everett is focusing on motivational speaking for The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis and his upcoming wedding in the fall of 2009.

However, it is the way in which one deals with life's surprises that proves the true nature of one's character.

Kara Hackett
Life Editor

Upon first hearing Everett's story, I was absolutely amazed. Here was a man whose entire lifestyle was formed around staying in peak physical condition, and after a split second collision, he could not even lift his hand. When Everett woke up the morning of his accident, he had absolutely no idea that his life would never be the same again. He did not have to worry about being able to walk or run. His life was simple. In fact, he was probably thinking about many of the same small tribulations that crowd my mind. Yet, in one second, Everett's old way of life came to an abrupt end, giving way to something he never expected and proving just how valuable every moment of life truly is.

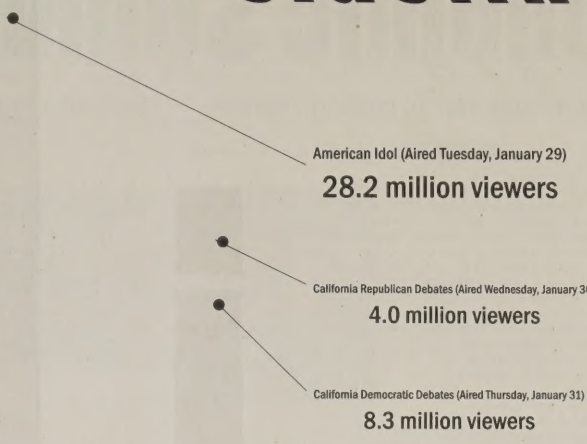
After reading Everett's story several times, what has stuck with me the most is how thankful Everett has become for everything in his life. His ability to walk is nothing short of miraculous, and yet, it is a task of which most people take advantage every day. Thus, not only has Everett's story given hope to the medical community, but also it has shed light upon many of the everyday blessings that most people take for granted. As I sit at my desk, able to walk and run and living without any chronic illnesses, all I can think of are the many aspects of my life with which I am not satisfied.

Like most people, I spend much of my time focusing on the blessings I do not have rather than the ones I do. Perhaps that is why accidents like Everett's occur: to remind us of what really matters in our lives and to give new hope to those among us who are truly suffering, for it is when life forces us to diverge from our path that we find our true destination. When obstacles, even those as seemingly hopeless as paralysis, arise in our lives, we are forced to look deep within ourselves to find the strength needed to overcome our impediments. Like Everett, we are driven to stand up and walk, and with every step we take, we are reminded of the monumental complexity of the task we have taken on.

Although Everett's story began with a tragic accident, it has turned into an incredible recovery, reminding viewers everywhere that although we have but one life to live, that one life is full of many second chances. There are some things in life that simply cannot be planned for or expected. Accidents are bound to happen in everyone's life; however, it is the way in which one deals with life's surprises that proves the true nature of one's character.

"I have to be honest, in the beginning ... I was like, 'Wow, why did this happen to me?'" Everett said. "But I just prayed, and God just calmed me and let me accept it for what it was... (Now) I'm happy people can know me like this. They can look at me and see what I've overcome and I'm still trying to overcome, and just see that life isn't that bad after all. It could be a whole lot worse."

POLITICS sidelined


American Idol (Aired Tuesday, January 29)
28.2 million viewers
California Republican Debates (Aired Wednesday, January 30)
4.0 million viewers
California Democratic Debates (Aired Thursday, January 31)
8.3 million viewers

Pop culture often overshadows current events

By Ian Strelec
Writer

As most people have heard by now, actor Heath Ledger, 28, died on January 22. Rather than discuss his death in particular, however, today's topic of debate is the United States' fixation on celebrities.

We, as a people, spend far more of our money and our time following the lives of celebrities than we do paying attention to current events. A large majority of publications, newspapers, and magazines are devoted more to the latest Hollywood gossip than actually relevant news.

The sad fact of the matter is that news doesn't sell magazines. Few people care about the war in Iraq. Less even know the names of all the presidential candidates competing for office this November, let alone their politics.

If you really think about it... what's more important? Stalking people simply because they were in a movie you liked, or deciding who is going to be the leader of the free world for the next four years?

Ian Strelec
Writer

With Mr. Ledger's death, the point is once again proven that Americans jump more at the latest juicy Hollywood gossip than the primaries, which are going on now and play a tremendous role in the presidential election. If you really think about it...what's more important? Stalking people simply because they were in a movie you liked, or deciding who is going to be leader of the free world for the next four years? Which one is going to have lasting impact?

Why is it that we care so much? Why do people's lives have significance simply because they have money or because we see them on TV? Living vicariously through the rich and powerful is not healthy and does absolutely nothing for us as a country. It should be far more important who is leading our country, who we put into office, than who gets voted American Idol.

Shows like Survivor and American Idol have only furthered this fixation on celebrities, as it gets steadily worse with shows like Flavor of Love, Rock of Love, I Love New York, and A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila, every single one of which is a ripoff of the Bachelor/Bachelorette, the only difference being they use a washed up or B-List celeb as the star with random people competing for their affections. If these shows were not ridiculous enough to begin with, New York's only claim to fame is that she was shot down on a previous season of Flavor of Love, and Tila Tequila is only on TV because she has one of the most popular Myspace pages on the site.

It really is not that hard to sit down and watch the news once instead of turning on garbage such as these shows. They would not be on the air if people did not watch them, and the fact that they remain on the air despite terribly clichéd lines and obviously scripted dialogue, as well as entirely ridiculous premises says a great deal about American society on the whole.

So I ask...beg, even...that you just consider watching the news, reading a book, or opening up a newspaper. Go online; find out who is running in the presidential elections. Form opinions on the issues and know what is going on in the world outside our borders, know what is going on in our government, instead of knowing every detail of the latest episode of some stupid reality show.

Voters must look beyond ethnicity, religion

New polls show Americans may be upset by minority presidential candidates

UPCOMING PRIMARIES/CAUCUSES

With Hilary Clinton and Barack Obama competing for the Democratic nomination and Mike Huckabee, John McCain, and Ron Paul competing for the Republican nomination, the race to the White House continues.

FEBRUARY 19 — HI, WI, WA

MARCH 4 — OH, TX, RI, VT

MARCH 8 — WY

MARCH 11 — MS

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

This presidential election has provided a number of historic first and signs of progress and tolerance in America. Running for President still is a black man, a woman, and until very recently, a Mormon. However despite these signs of progress, recently poll numbers suggest that America may not have come as far as we had thought.

A Harris Poll / BYU study found that 47% of Americans would be angry or upset if Mitt Romney were to serve as President, 33% of Americans would be upset if Barack Obama were to serve as President, and 30% of Americans would be upset if Hillary Clinton were to serve as President. These numbers undoubtedly have a great deal to do with the candidates themselves and not necessarily their religion, race, and gender. However, as a follow up, it was found that 27% of Americans would be upset if a Mormon were to serve as President, 25% of Americans would be upset if a woman were to serve as President, and only 9% of Americans would be upset if a black person were to serve as President.

These poll numbers are especially troubling during a year when it would seem that Americans have been willing to embrace candidates based solely on their merits. The large number of Americans, however, who would have a problem with a Mormon, woman, or black person being President shows that America still has a long way to go to reach true tolerance. So much of what these candidate stand for, especially in the case of Barack Obama, is a call to change the current state of American politics. It appears that in order to change politics, Obama or Clinton will have to first overcome the deep-seated biases that have plagued Americans for years.

On the surface, Mitt Romney appeared to the most Presidential candidate running for office. He just seemed to look the part, but his Mormon faith made him far from the traditional white Anglo-Saxon protestant candidate. Americans' unwillingness to tolerate a Mormon leader speaks to the importance of religion in American politics. Despite a separation of church and state, Americans want to see a leader whose values and ethics reflect their own, including similar religious beliefs.

This year's crop of presidential candidates does demonstrate that Americans are becoming more willing to move away from a white male president. This increased tolerance, however, is clearly not present with all Americans as poll numbers this week suggest. The fact that so many Americans have a problem with minorities as President is troubling, but the best way to end closed-mindedness is to show everyone that minorities too are capable leaders. I certainly don't advocate voting for a minority candidate just to make a social statement; I simply hope that Americans will vote for who they think will be the best President. That means a candidate with experience, toughness, and an ability to lead and inspire, none of which require a specific race, gender, or religious belief.

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homestead high school
4310 homestead road
fort wayne, indiana 46814

Life

Debut album of New York indie-rock band lives up to record hype, see pg. 2A

Friday, February 15, 2008

MORP dances around theme ideas

Theme, location become struggling points for Student Government

By Arezoo Nazari
Writer

With MORP just around the corner, people have been excited yet nervous all at once. Between the theme and the location of this year's dance, Student Government is working hard to make it one of the most fun dances of the year. MORP is actually PROM spelled backwards, where instead of having the guys buy dinner and plan for the events before the dance, the girls take on the responsibility. However, this dance has a requirement of casual attire, unlike semi-formal and prom.

After previous years of pirates, "get lucky", and army, this year's MORP theme is so far undecided. Having trouble coming up with a theme that everyone will agree on is a problem that Student Government has to solve. The best way to solve this issue is after the MORP committee throws out ideas, Student Government then votes on the most successful and enjoyable theme that they think would be the best. The theme of Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles has been thrown in the air and many around the school have multiple opinions on it.

"I think the theme is pretty lame. I mean with 2,000 people in our school couldn't we think of anything better than that? " stated Zach Stine (11).

Many students are thinking the same thing and others are opposing it, and the outcome is questionable on whether or not we will find out.

Unfortunately for some and fortunately for others, the theme of Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles has not yet been finalized. After much collaboration, Student Government discovered there are copyright issues which must be resolved. The MORP committee has to be careful on the t-shirt's design so it does not infringe any law and has been e-mailing with the creator of the cartoon to resolve the issue. The theme is still in the air because of the copyright snare.

"The problem that we have is with any design that the board decides on for a t-shirt has to carefully be drawn because once you put a mask on a turtle it instantly looks like one of the Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles," April Moss, adviser of Student Government, said.

Student Government divides responsibilities for every event. Each grade usually takes on a certain dance or event. This year's committee is made up of freshman. With all the tasks that they have to organize, their one priority is finding a location for MORP. Before this year MORP has always been at Hilgers; however, another issue has come up which does not allow the dance to be held at the usual site. The MORP committee has been forced to scrabble to find a place to hold the event due to a state regulation pertaining to permits for building capacity.

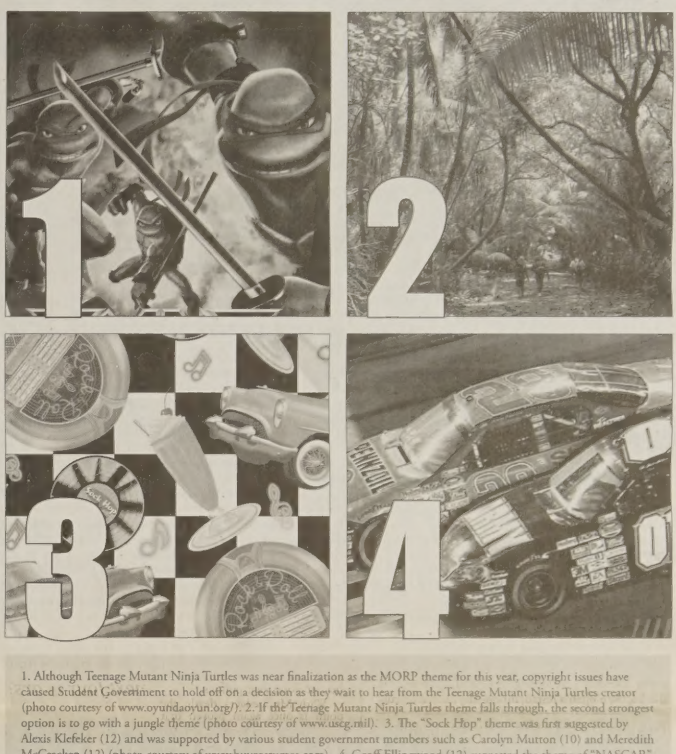
"Previously MORP has always been at Hilgers and with us running into the problem of having no MORP site results in more work. Booking a place in one month for 800 people is going to be a challenge, but it can be done," April Moss said.

A change from middle school to high school has been a huge shift, especially the difference in responsibility that is given in student government. With the freshman class in charge of MORP, they have a lot on their hands where as last year most of the big events were covered.

"Student Government in high school is a lot different. Usually in middle school the teachers handle the big jobs, like taking care of the budget, choosing a place to have the events, and running the meetings, but in high school the kids do all of that stuff," Anuj Khemka said.

With all the comments about the theme this year and how it is good or bad, or having the committee look around for a location will make an interesting outcome for the student body. As MORP is only six weeks away, the Student Government, specifically the dance committee has been challenged to step up and make this year's dance a success.

SUGGESTED THEME IDEAS



1. Although Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles was near finalization as the MORP theme for this year, copyright issues have caused Student Government to hold off on a decision as they wait to hear from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles creator (photo courtesy of www.oyundaoyun.org/). 2. If the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles theme falls through, the second strongest option is to go with a jungle theme (photo courtesy of www.usgs.mil). 3. The "Sock Hop" theme was first suggested by Alexis Klefeker (12) and was supported by various student government members such as Carolyn Mutton (10) and Meredith McCracken (12) (photo courtesy of www.buycostumes.com). 4. Geoff Ellingwood (12) suggested the theme of "NASCAR" for the MORP theme. The final decision on the MORP theme will be made on Tuesday, February 19, 2008 during Student Government's weekly formal meeting. (photo courtesy of www.heartpunchstudio.com/).

Students learn from approachable teachers

Individual style provides comfortable, easy atmosphere in classroom

By Flor Ortega
Writer

In the corner of a classroom sits a group of attentive five-year old kindergarteners. They surround a woman as she holds a storybook in her hands and reads to them. With every word she reads, their curious eyes brighten because she is their teacher, and they look up to her admirably in every possible way.

However, from elementary school to high school, circumstances change dramatically. Although prone to the authority of friends and celebrities, many students have made the unfortunate decision to rarely seek advice from teachers who have the potential to make a profound impact on their lives. Regrettably, as students leave high school, it is evident that many of them have not taken advantage of the incredible resources that have been available to them every day of their high school career.

"Most people like to view teachers as the 'enemy,'" Valerie Parker (9) said. "Even though they are the ones who help us most."

Often overlooked as adversaries, teachers are necessary attributes to a student's high school career and post-high school development. Although it is typical for students to get caught up in the chaos of high school life, many of them have lost sight of their goals and plans for the future while doing so.

Attempting to keep wavering students on a path to ensure success, teachers are important influences in the lives of those they educate.

"I want students to take advantage of living in a country where they can determine everything that happens to them and express themselves freely," Jan Venderly, English teacher, said. "I also want them to understand, however, that there are certain things they have to do to get certain results."

When a teacher is able to catch a student's attention, making them truly listen as well as process what they have been told, a world of opportunities is opened for both the teacher and the student.

"I really love Mr. Baker for world history," Emily Potts (10) said. "He's really open, and he tells us tons of stories about his life. Somehow [his experiences] always connect to what we're learning about in history. He also asks us rhetorical questions that make history come to life."

Students frequently excel in an environment were they feel comfortable. Having surroundings that a student finds pleasant and enjoyable contributes to the student's ability to learn.

"Although Ms. Venderly's a tough teacher, she's hilarious, and she makes English interesting," Potts said. "She's really easy to talk to if you have a problem about homework or what classes you should take, but she also makes you think for yourself."

The way that a teacher presents herself to the class is important. Students look forward to a class where the teacher is approachable.

"Mrs. Husar is the nicest teacher at Homestead," Micheal Yang (11) said. "She provides help with any art needs, she never criticizes students and she likes to make art fun instead of it being just art. She is my favorite teacher."

In general, human beings want to know that they are cared about and that they have a purpose in life. Complying with their nature, students find a certain satisfaction with the knowledge that are welcomed and wanted. All too often, teenagers and adolescents feel as if they are moving against the current of the entire world and that adults simply do not understand them. However, when students feel that teachers understand their tribulations, they are more likely to trust them. Thus, teachers who empathize with their students create a trusting relationship and a firm foundation for an education.

"Mr. Waldman takes time to get to know all of his students individually," Lauren Bachle (12) said. "He encourages each of his students to learn, [and] he makes you pay attention in class. Not only does he make Ecology interesting, but Mr. Waldman [also] builds a great teacher-student relationship."

An influential teacher is strict as well as lenient, possessing hundreds of significant values and unique qualities that reach out to students at the high school age level. Although an easy teacher may appeal to students' lazy work ethic, a profoundly helpful teacher knows that perseverance must be enforced on a day to day basis.

"Ms. Venderly is always striving for her students to come to the conclusion that she wants and she never accepts the answer 'I don't know,'" Nick Jewson (12) said. "You will walk away from her class and never forget what she said."

An influential teacher knows the importance of treating students with respect while still maintaining control of the classroom. She can understand each student's individual needs and uses those needs to help her students succeed.

Though what a student experiences in class is important to their academic advancement, the way in which a student applies his knowledge outside of a classroom setting is much more valuable. When it comes down to it, a teacher's career is all about the students. Students provide teachers with a purpose and a goal; however, it is the students' responsibility in return to take the initiative to apply themselves in class in order to fulfill the teacher's purpose in the world.

"I think all teachers have a passion for their subject areas and want to make their students see all the things that create that enthusiasm in themselves," Mrs. Husar, art teacher, said. "I don't know that I am always successful in displaying that enthusiasm. Sometimes the day to day grind can take over, but I hope that in general, I can make students see the 'magic' that exists in the possibilities of their own creativity."

The bottom line: being a teacher is not simple. It entails effort, dedication and the incredible responsibility of making an impact on young lives.

"Teaching is not a job," Mrs. Johnson, Etymology teacher, said. "It is a mission, and those who come to it and stay with it-for the most part-know that and honor that and the students they teach."

FOCUSING on influential teachers

MS. VENDERLY

"You will walk away from her class and never forget what she said."-Nick Jewson (11)

years teaching: 9
education: Indiana University
fun fact: Lived in Dublin, Ireland for five months

MR. BAKER

"He asks us rhetorical questions that make history come to life."-Emily Potts (10)

years teaching: 17
subject: world history
education: Ball State
interests: mowing grass and watching movies

MR. WALDMAN

"Mr. Waldman takes time to know all of his students individually."-Lauren Bachle (12)

years teaching: 40
subjects: ecology and advanced environmental science
interests: coin collecting and snowmobiling

MRS. JOHNSON

"She never fails to teach me new words every day." -Colin Lyman (11)

years teaching: 20
subjects: etymology
education: University of Toledo, Harvard University

MR. JAEGAR

"He always had a different way of teaching that made it easier to learn." -Kyle Beadles (11)

years teaching: 13
subject: German
education: Kalamazoo College
interests: long walks on the beach at sunset

Bri Neal connects class to real world

Senior uses Spanish speaking skill to help others in the community

By Derek Luttrell
Writer

With a lifelong interest in the Spanish language, Brittany Neal (12) is an incredibly diversified student with an aspiration to utilize her talents for the good of others. In spite of her demanding extra-curricular schedule, ranging from track practice to SADD meetings, Neal manages to find time to volunteer, tending to issues that seem to be put on society's back burner.

Spartana: How did you become fluent in Spanish?

Neal: I went to an Arts Magnet Elementary School, which begins teaching students Spanish and French from pre-school and up. I [also] worked at Cebolla's Mexican Grill for four years. The schools I attended in the Fort Wayne Community school district were very diverse and from a young age, many of my friends growing up were Hispanic. I was also lucky enough to have parents who were interested in the language and able to help.

Spartana: When did you begin volunteering at Lutheran? what inspired you to help others with foreign languages?

Neal: I started volunteering at Lutheran at the beginning of my junior year. At first, I did it to gain hours for Key Club, and to decipher whether or not I would be interested in working in a hospital someday. I worked in the ER a couple of days a week, and I loved helping the patients. This semester is when I became an intern to the Child Life Specialist to translate for the Spanish-speaking patients.

Spartana: What inspired you to help others with foreign languages?

I have…loved the language…since I was four. The first time I was able to translate for a family who could not understand an English-speaking party, it clicked. I knew that was an area in which I could help that not many others could. Once I realized this, I wanted to teach it. I've heard you're supposed to teach what you love. I wanted to give to others the same tools that I had that would benefit their lives. Knowing Spanish can only help you in life.

Spartana: Since you are in the future teachers program, to which grade level(s) do you see yourself teaching Spanish?

Neal: Right now I teach 7th and 8th grade at Woodside Middle School, and I love it. Part of me is very interested to see if I wouldn't like to advance up to the high school grade levels. So after two years of teaching middle school, I hope that when it comes to student teaching in college, I will be lucky enough to try teaching high school students.

Spartana: What is it like being in the procedure room with the patients? What do you do to comfort them and their family?

Neal: Almost every time I have been in the procedure room it has been very intense. I am always on my toes. Most children do not handle their preparation very well. We definitely try to comfort the children and their parents, but much of the time is spent trying to distract them from what the doctors are doing. We use a lot of toys with lights and colors and just try to keep their attention away from what's really about to happen to them.

Spartana: How do you translate the medical terms to explain what is going on to the patients?

Neal: I am not forced to learn any amount of vocabulary, but I take it upon myself to familiarize myself with medical terms because I feel that it is helpful and makes things go smoother. There are medical terms I can barely understand or explain in English so I definitely put forth a lot of effort to assist the doctors with the necessary communication.

Spartana: Are there other people that help with Spanish-speaking patients at Lutheran? If you are the only one, do you feel that that puts a lot of responsibility on you?

Neal: Yes, I am the only one. The hospital's only means of reaching someone that can help with Spanish, is if they call a language line, or yell down the hallway for one of the few cleaning ladies [if on the floor] to come and translate. Some nurses and doctors are required to carry little cards with certain phrases translated to Spanish. Many of the hospital staff is required, in college, to learn a number of medical terms. I don't mind the responsibility when I'm there. I love to help. It's when I'm not there that I feel the most guilt. I am only there a few days out of the week. If I'm not there, and neither the patient nor their family can understand, the hospital staff has to do the best they can.

Spartana: Based on your experiences, do you believe the Lutheran staff does a satisfactory job in catering to their differences of those unable to speak English?

Neal: I think that the patients can tell that the hospital staff does care about them and genuinely wants to help but there is an obvious barrier. I would not say satisfactory, but they are trying to improve a communicative convenience for these patients and their families.

Spartana: Is there anything else you do around the community?

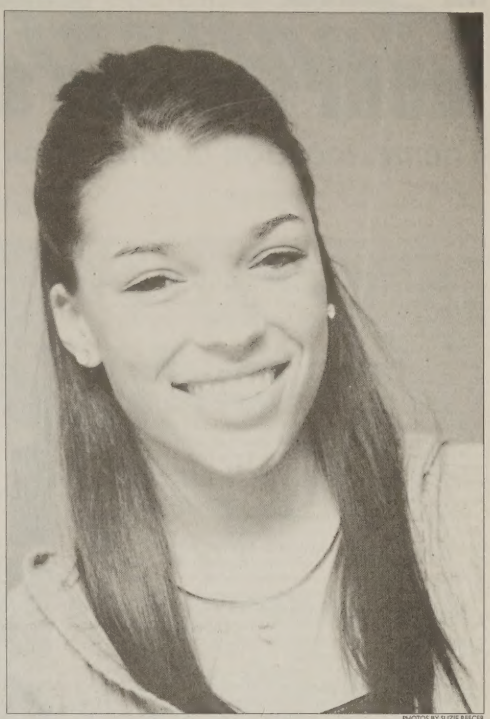
Neal: I am on the Service Leaders Summit Youth Council for Senator Evan Bayh. The council is made up of seven high school and college students from the entire state of Indiana. We want to rise up youth leaders in Indiana and coordinate events that honor the youth that commit to community service. I am also involved with Habitat for Humanity.

Spartana: What groups are you involved with at school?

Neal: I have been in Spanish club, SADD and Key Club for the past three years. Since track has just begun, I have had to discontinue my involvement in all three, considering they are all right after school. I also have college classes at Ivy Tech in the afternoons.

Spartana: In order to balance so many commitments you must have a busy schedule. What does your schedule usually look like for one week?

Neal: Tuesdays and Wednesdays I go to Lutheran, [and on] Thursdays and Fridays I go to Woodside during second and third periods. On Mondays, I alternate between the two. I have track practice everyday after school. On Thursdays, I have a Psychology class [and] Monday afternoons I tutor in Spanish. I also go to church three days a week.



PHOTOS BY SUZIE RIECER

Spartana: It is understood that your grades are very important to you. How do you manage your time between school, the track team and volunteering?

Neal: It is definitely difficult. This is one of my busiest years and yet; it is also the year, academically, that I have done the best. I have maintained A's all semester. As challenging as it has been, my strategy is just to use my free time as wisely as possible. When I'm in track practice, I put my mind, strength and energy into track, same with Lutheran and my grades.

Packed lunch vs school lunch

Students voice opinions about differences between meals

By Taylor Harruff
Writer

Cinnamon rolls, French fries, nachos, subs, the list goes on and on. Any of these food items sound familiar? Well, they should. All of these items, and more, are a part of our everyday lunch.

"There is a lot of variety," Emily Karns (11) said. "At my old school there was only one line and you pretty much had to hope that you liked the food."

With all of the options we are given during lunch time, it is easy to forget about the ability for students to bring their own packed lunches to school.

"I tend to pack [lunch] more, so I can be sure to eat a balanced mean," Kate Ruhrold (12) said.

Most students feel that it is simpler to purchase the lunches that are offered at the school.

"I buy a school lunch," Andy Baugher (11) said. "I don't have the time in the morning to pack something."

While packing a lunch for school may be a way for students to monitor what they eat, they can often find themselves eating whatever it most convenient to pack. With being crunched in the morning to get to school before the tardy bell, a student who chooses to pack lunch can wind up bringing the items easiest to pack, such as a bag of chips, or food that is already prepackaged.

"It's important to stay healthy," Karns said. "But sometimes it's hard to pack everything in time, and you have to worry about things staying fresh."

Along with the ability to pack whatever you want, students who bring their lunch with them also have the advantage of not waiting in line for their picked lunch of choice.

"Packing is a lot easier," Elena Schmidt (10) said. "That way you don't have to wait in line for your lunch, and you can sit at your table longer."

While students who pack their lunch are free from the burden of waiting in long lines, they are left with the chance that their food may not be fresh from when they packed it.

"It's easier to buy," Baugher said. "That way you don't have to worry about the food getting smashed, or going bad while it sits at school."

> *"Packing [lunch] is a lot easier. That way you don't have to wait in line for your lunch and you can sit at your table longer"*
>
> Elena Schmidt (10)
> Student

Although students who choice to pack their lunch have the advantage of packing whatever food they wish to eat, it is possible that they are also missing out on some of the variety that the school offers when it comes to lunches.

"The food is always fresh and warm," Karns said. "There is a lot to choose from, my favorite [lunch] is [on] Wednesday, with the vegetable plate and sugar cookie combo."

All students who decide to eat at school have their designated day of the week which offers their favorite food of choice for the week. "Fridays," Alex DeFreeuw (11) said. "A nice chicken sandwich with a strawberry-kiwi drink."

"Thursday, [roll day]," Ruhrold said, "My friends and I have a tradition, we buy rolls and warm chocolate chip cookies. It's our favorite day of the week."

Whether or not students choose to pack or purchase their lunch there are clear advantages to both.

"Buying is a lot easier," Defreeuw said. "But packing a lunch allows you to eat exactly what you want."

PHOTOS BY SUZIE RIECER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ERIN QUINN

Hospitality Club has success with annual 'Winter Dinner'

By Flor Ortega
Writer

A stove sizzles from heat as the food atop it is cooked to perfection. Stomachs growl as people sit at tables, patiently waiting with watering mouths for their delectable food to arrive. A Hospitality Club member enters the room with a tray that is closely followed by a steamy aroma. Dish after dish is served as newly prepared meals are consumed and enjoyed.

On Jan. 25 the Hospitality Club held a Winter Dinner in the community room. Members planned a menu for the dinner and also prepared and served the food. Club members started planning the dinner late in October and met once a week to continue preparing. Preparation of the food took a total of one afternoon and one full day. Members were excused from classes on that day. They divided up different tasks so that they were able to get more done in smaller amount of time. Half of the members used their time to decorate the community room while the other half prepared the food for cooking.

Main Course
-chicken
-fettucini
-green beans

Dessert
-brownie towers
-cheesecake
-fruit pastries

The members were required to show up an hour and a half before the dinner to actually begin the cooking the food.

"We were lucky not to have anything go wrong," Hopitality Club member Katrina Lucas (10) said.

In the end, the club cooked for a total of 50 people. The menu consisted of cheese balls, crackers, vegetables and dip for appetizers with a side of tossed green salad and Italian bread. Parmesan chicken, fettuccine noodles, green beans with almonds and stuffed mushroom garnish were on the plate for the main dish. To conclude the dinner, the Hospitality Club served brownie towers, mini cheesecakes and fruit pastries for dessert.

Apart from giving the attendees the chance to taste the accomplishments of the club, the Winter Dinner served other purposes for the members.

"We wanted all of our members to be able to experience what it is like to be in the hospitality field and what it takes to throw events, like our Winter Dinner," Joanna Nguyen (9) said.

The Winter Dinner represents only a small fraction of what Hospitality Club really is. Students enjoy the club not only for the special events it hosts, but also enjoy the idea of being in a group.

"I love the Hospitality Club because, for the most part, you either eat food, watch people make food or make food yourself. It is also nice to spend time with others who have the same interests as me," Nguyen said.

For other members, the club not only offers a recreational means to enjoy food and the company of others who share the same interests, but it helps them to prepare for the futures they wish to seek after high school.

"I joined Hospitality Club because when I grow up, I want to have some sort of culinary job and the Hospitality Club helps with teaching you about the culinary field and other fields like hotel management," Lucas said.

When it came down to it, the four months of hard work and cooking that the members put into making their Winter Dinner paid off.

"In the end, we got many good compliments and everything went smoothly," Lucas said.

Reflection on the holiday of love

Most awkward holiday ever created

By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

Let me begin bluntly; Valentine's Day is the most awkward holiday ever created. To start, its mascot is a scantily dressed baby that shoots people with arrows of love.

We have to make our way into Hallmark only to be looked down upon by grizzled old women as we laugh at inappropriate cards. The prerequisite to enjoying this holiday is a perfect loving relationship with perfectly constructed date with a perfectly matched partner; why am I not surprised that we rarely achieve the ideal Valentine's Day celebration?

No matter if you are in a blooming relationship, single, or on the brink of relationship disaster, this holiday provides awkward expectations that, I believe, were created for the humor of those not involved in the floundering outcomes.

Valentine's Day is composed of over-done love letters, surprises gone wrongs and frustrated girlfriends who thought their boyfriends were going to breakthrough their emotional stoicism. The only thing that could make this holiday any more awkward is if all of our political correctness advocates realized that this holiday stems from the feast of Saint Valentine, a Catholic icon.

Maybe I shouldn't have brought that up, I'll just stick to some of the odd situations that occurred yesterday. Couples fretted over how to make each other happy. Single girls watched the Notebook with their favorite men—Ben and Jerry. Someone worried about whether they should give a valentine (of whatever sorts) to their crush, and someone else tried to avoid their stalker as attempts at one-sided romanticism targeted them.

Couples who are on the edge of breaking up feigned picturesque love and couples in the making tried to figure out what the heck they were supposed to do. To top this all off, I bet a bunch of you got that call from grandma, "Happy Valentine's Day honey, is there anyone special in your life?"

To me, Valentine's Day is proof that roses have thorns. It's not that I am unhappy with my relationship or that my special someone failed to provide that unattainable perfect date. But the truth is, I've been a part of at least half of the aforementioned akward and dissapointing scenarios and I'm tired of people pretending that Valentine's Day has to be some grand romantic event. Let's just chill and eat some candy hearts. Be My Valentine…crunch. I Love You…crunch Marry Me…crunch.

Really, if everyone fell in love just like in the chick flicks, we'd have a bunch of people PDAing (yes, it's definitely a verb) in public parks, skating rinks, street corners and before they got on the bus—much to the disposition of the people around them. Boys would be sickly obsessive over girls, and we, in turn, would fall in love, get hurt and then go back to the jerk who ripped our heart apart.

Sound like fun? I know that you will be reading this the day after the event. Any forewarning or advice for survival will come just a few measly hours too late. So instead, I will simply say, that's it's ok if your Valentine's Day wasn't as perfect as planned. In fact, you're completely normal if the day was highlighted by awkwardness and stress as opposed to love, lace and chocolate.

My wish for you is that you enjoy the candy you received yesterday and that in itself will be enough. Oh, and for those of you going out this weekend…Good Luck.

Valentine's Day brings friends, couples together for an evening

By Hana Hawash
Writer

Mixed in with the candy hearts and declarations of love students were scrambling to figure out what would be the perfect Valentine's Day date. Some decided to spend it with their closest friends, while others dared to venture out to their favorite restaurant. Whatever students picked to do, they all had one thing in common, and that was spending time with someone they care for.

Although it is no longer as simple as buying your favorite cartoon character's Valentine's Day card, a good majority of students still feel that the small gestures are what mean the most.

"This is kind of silly, but I miss being a little kid and making our own little mail boxes out of Kleenex boxes, and everyone got a little Valentine's Day card from the class...I miss that more than anything," Sabrina Gutierrez (12) said.

Even though there were plenty of options displayed in the walkway of every single store, students still found it a little difficult to purchase the perfect gift for their significant other, while on a small budget.

"This year we both were [on a low budget]," Felicia Miller (11) said. "That's why were had dinner at my house instead of going out."

If making dinner at home is still a little out of the price range, there are other options.

"Something simple, and cute...A cute card, with a note in it." Miller said.

While we all have to be realistic about the gifts we may receive, some students still like to think about the spectacular options that are available.

"[I received] a diamond heart necklace," Arpita Bhardwarj (10) said. "It was absolutely beautiful."

Boys and girls alike found it difficult to find just the right gift to buy for their Valentine.

"Guys are so hard to shop for," Gutierrez said. "I usually just pay attention to their likes when we talk or go out, then make a mental note and buy it later. If they don't express their opinions on things like that, then I buy whatever I feel like getting them."

Although it may have seemed like more a burden, buying a Valentine's Day gift for someone is supposed to represent your affection and how you care for them.

"It would have been fun to surprise her, but I would like to let her pick it out so I didn't have to worry about it," Spencer Bagan (12) said.

No matter how you choose to spend your holiday it is always important to celebrate it with someone who you care for, and enjoy spending time with. No matter the gift, sometimes it is always best just to make something, or give them something you know they will enjoy.

Chipotle brings variety to town

New Mexican resaurant opens doors in Fort Wayne, additional location in future

We walked in to this place (which happened to be well over its maximum capacity of 67) with a few predispositions. This trip wasn't going to provide anything new or spectacular, just a sack of burritos and maybe chips and salsa. As a few of us had already eaten at some of Chipotle's other locations in Denver and West Lafayette, we knew what we were getting in to: 100% pure awesome.

Haley Zimmerman:

My only complaint is that they incorrectly labeled my burrito wrapper, but when I accidentally bit into Margaret's steak fajita burrito, I honestly couldn't complain. Actually, I didn't even notice my mistake until she opened up my burrito and noticed that it tasted nothing like what I ordered, because it was not, in fact, the chicken burrito, with black beans, cheese and lettuce, that I ordered. Incidentally, my burrito ended up as entirely superior combination mixed together especially for my own taste buds. I don't add any of the four salsas to my Chipotle burrito; I think it ruins the natural flavors of my choice ingredients.

Chipotle makes a darned good burrito, overflowing with whichever ingredients you choose to stuff your tortilla to the point that there is no question about the fact that it will tear, and you will get some delicious burrito-goo on yourself.

This food was well worth the half-hour wait in line behind the people who were literally wrapped around the inside of the building waiting to get their naturally-raised animal meat and fresh veggies.

Margaret Distler:

When I hear the name 'Chipotle', my first thought is of a homeless beggar man in Denver. Amy Young (12), Amanda Leas (10), Austin Hetrick ('07), Mario Baldassari ('07) and I ate at a Chipotle in Denver when we were on the journalism trip last April.

We were finishing our meals when a man came up and asked us for spare change, claiming he had lost his license and he was in need of money for food. The guys gave him their spare change and I offered him the rest of my chips. He thanked us and cleared our trays from our table. Now whether or not the man was actually without a license, we'll never know. But as Austin pointed out, it is better to just give the person some of your spare change than to be mean. It never hurts to be nice.

Learning that my second meal from Chipotle was going to be delivered by Haley took some pressure off of me to give up my spare change. (I'm not trying to say Chipotle is the popular homeless person hangout. My first experience there was just, for lack of better words, interesting.)

My dilemma at the Fort Wayne Chipotle was deciding what to order. After looking at the slightly intimidating menu, I went with the Steak Fajita Burrito.

There are so many choices for toppings in addition to ordering just a burrito; it requires a little bit of thought. Haley kindly brought the food to the pub room, where we began to enjoy our meal. But as Haley mentioned earlier, I started my dinner by mistaking her burrito creation for mine. Hers wasn't that bad, though. In all honesty, I liked her burrito a lot more than mine. She will be ordering for me for future pub food stops.

The Chipotle chips were also rather delicious. With two bags for four people, we had no problem transferring the chips from the bags to our mouths to our stomachs. Yum. We also ordered two sides of salsa. The salsa was not as liquid-y as I would have liked, rather it was a mix of veggies. Nevertheless, it added the right amount of flavor to the chips for that extra touch.

Luke Chase:

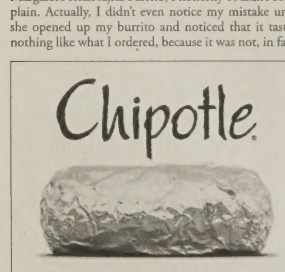
My first thoughts of the foil-wrapped Barbacoa burrito drew a paralell between Chipotle and Moe's Southwest Grill. I did not even taste the first bite as I had been waiting for dinner during another late night of pulling to gether all the pieces of this issue. It is true that hunger is the best sauce.

After getting a little something in my stomach I remembered to taste and found it to be similar to Moe's in apperance only, it was far less superior in flavor. However it should be noted that in price there is no competition.

The Barbacoa is supposed to be the spiciest burrito but I found it lacking in heat.

The Chips were fantastic, the Fresh Tomato salsa was dry and chuncky and the Tomatillo-Green Salsa was too runny; a happy medium needs to be found.

Overall the quality was not up to par with other established Mexcian places but for a quick bite at a good price I think it would be tough to beat Chipotle. Look for a new location at Jefferson Pointe on Feb. 29.



BURRITO
Giant flour tortilla, cilantro-lime rice, choice of pinto or vegetarian black beans, choice of meat, choice of salsa, cheese or sour cream. The vegetarian burrito comes with guacamole.

FAJITA BURRITO
Just like a burrito but with sautéed pepper and onions instead of beans. The vegetarian fajita has both sautéed veggies and black beans instead of meat, and comes with guacamole.

BURRITO BOWL
Burrito or fajita in a bowl, no tortilla.

TACOS
Soft flour or crispy corn tortillas, choice of meat, choice of salsa, cheese or sour cream, and romaine lettuce.

SALAD
Leafy romaine lettuce with beans, choice of meat, salsa & cheese, with freshly made chipotle-honey vinaigrette.

(add .50 to any of the below)

CHICKEN	5.60
Naturally raised, vegetarian fed chicken marinated for hours in our chipotle pepper adobo, then simply grilled.	
STEAK	5.75
Marinated for hours in our chipotle adobo, then grilled.	
CARNITAS	5.60
Naturally raised pork, seasoned with thyme, bay leaves, juniper berries and freshly cracked black pepper - seared, then braised for hours.	
BARBACOA	5.60
Spicy, shredded beef, braised with our own chipotle adobo, cumin, cloves, garlic and oregano.	
VEGGIE BURRITO	5.25
Includes our fresh-made guacamole and vegetarian black beans. Add sautéed peppers and onions for a vegetarian fajita.	

SALSAS	
Roasted Chili-Corn	medium
Tomatillo-Green Chili	medium
Tomatillo-Red Chili	hot
Fresh Tomato	mild
EXTRAS	
Chips & Guacamole	2.00
Chips & Salsa	1.25
Guacamole	1.50
Chips	.70
DRINKS	
Bottled Drinks	1.50/2.25
Soda	1.39/1.69

musicreviews

Vampire Weekend

By Brad Lufkin
Designer

Some of the New York-based band Vampire Weekend's debut album unfortunately leaked onto the internet about a month ago. It's a sad day when a CD leaks onto the internet, surrendering some of the potential it may have to be an enjoyable CD. When you go into an album with fresh ears, you absorb all of what the album has to offer at once. When all or just part of an album leaks onto the internet, it hurts both the artist's profit and the listeners' overall experience.

Despite the leakage, Vampire Weekend's self-titled first CD is still overflowing with awesome. No matter how much of the band's greatness leaked onto the web, "Vampire Weekend" definitely deserves all the hype that's been around for a few years. Since their early days, the band has become one of the first "blog bands," whose material is first released onto various music blogs. In that time, critics have noticed the band and highly anticipated the release of their first album.

The heavily Afro-pop-influenced band, which formed at Columbia University, is not surprisingly clever and witty. Their album is filled with smart, little references to such things as a 17th-century French architect and the comma that's used just before a grammatical conjunction that precedes the last item in a list of three or more items. But then again, every album does that.

"Mansard Roof," the leading song, encompasses what Vampire Weekend is all about: brainy, indie-rock tunes which have the habit of being amazing. The band makes it seem as though they are not even trying; the songs flow effortlessly, one after another.

Their upbeat mood is showcased in "Oxford Comma," a tune whose opening line trashes the questionable use of this punctuation. These Columbia graduates have peculiarly strong beliefs toward this mark. Nonetheless, after accepting their apathetic hatred toward the innocent punctuation mark, you'll fall in love with their catchy lyrics and cheery beats.

PHOTO SHOTSRINGOUT.COM

Jack Johnson

By Meredith McCracken
Writer

After a two-year hiatus from his mellow, surf inspired music scene, acoustic singer Jack Johnson debuted his fifth album, Sleep Through the Static on Feb. 5. Competing for attention with Mardis Gras and Super Tuesday, Johnson's album has shone through, and is currently number one on the iTunes album downloads.

The album itself is slightly different from the music that many of his fans have grown accustomed to. Listeners can hear less than hidden messages about the war and the struggling environment. Many of the tracks are fun and playful which is most likely inspiration drawn from Johnson's two children.

PHOTO AMAZON.COM

The opening track, "All at Once," is a soulful beginning to a collection of tracks that are a little darker than the lighthearted In Between Dreams and Sing-Alongs and Lullabies, the soundtrack to the Curious George movie. Throughout the album, he continues the depth and social commentary from the first track with songs like "Angel," "They Do, They Don't," and "Losing Keys."

Part of the reason for the more soulful sound is the addition of a new member to the band. Fans heard some of the keyboard skills from Zach Gill in the In Between Dreams album and Gill is now a permanent member of Johnson's surf sound crew. All of the songs on the album feel more full and have many more layers than songs from previous albums, giving it a more mature sound.

Stereotypes aside, Johnson's album proves to be a step in a new direction for the artist. While he still has his solid fan base similar to artists such as Dave Matthews and Dispatch, he takes risks in Sleep Through the Static and they are successful, not sleepy at all.

PHOTOS BY MARGARET DISTLER

three's a charm

Girls' swim, dive team finishes third at state meet, places second in three events

By Margaret Distler
Design Editor

Donning her royal blue "H" cap and warm up jacket, she makes her way through the line of girls, congratulating each one before stepping on to the second place podium with her medal. 'She' could be six different girls: McKenzie Bagan (11), Kristen Witham (12), Emilee Keefer (11), Emily Haifley (12), Kristen Kinzer (11) or Tori Bagan (9). All six of the swimmers went home from the 34th IHSAA State Swimming Championships this past Saturday, Feb. 9, 2008 with a new piece of hardware: a second place medal. Not only did they arrive home as runner ups, they also came home as the third best swim team in the state.

The state swim meet itself has a much different environment than any other meet. With fans saving seats well before the first starting gun even goes off, the crowd support is phenomenal. Parents with cameras, friends with team shirts and endless team cheers help keep the athletes pumped up. Below the rows upon rows of enthusiastic fans is the IUPUI pool deck, bustling with girls in fast skins (specialized swim suits made to repel water, helping swimmers go faster) and coaches with dyed hair. Or maybe that is just Homestead's coach, Chad Englehart, who showed his support for his girls with his royal blue hair and gold 'H' to match the team cap.

"My hair helped to show the solidarity of the team," Englehart said. "It took pressure off the girls to see that their coach was one of them; it lightened up the situation. As for state, it was a fast and fun meet. Seeing coaches high-fiving athletes on the other team, just being with premiere coaches and athletes who wanted everyone to do well was great. All of the girls were breaking records…state records, national records, school records [and] personal records."

While the finals were held on Saturday, the preliminary races were on Friday. In order for a swimmer to make it to finals, she had to place in the top 16 of the prelims. Essentially, to be successful at state, a swimmer must have not one, but two great swims: one to secure a place in the finals, and one to win a title.

"The process [of getting to state] is a little frustrating, but having all of the people there to witness what you just did feels good," M. Bagan said, after contributing points by placing second in the 100 Fly, fourth in the 200 Medley Relay and 400 Free Relay and twelfth in the 200 IM. "Just seeing all of the girls do well makes it all worth it."

Despite the amount of pressure and the number of qualification rounds to get to finals, the girls held strong. They scored 216 points, placing Homestead in third place behind Carmel, who has placed first for the past 22 consecutive years, and Hamilton Southeastern. The state team consisted of Haifley, Amy Gutwein (12), Witham, Alexis Klefeker (12), Jessica Howard (12), Emily Aeschliman (12), Kinzer, E. Keefer, Mariah Kiefer (11), M. Bagan, Sarah Noel (11), Emeri Taivalkoski (10) and T. Bagan.

This third place ranking is the highest the girls' team has placed at state since 1997, when Homestead tied for third with DeKalb with 128 points. Homestead is the highest scoring Northeastern Indiana team in state history. In addition to winning third, the team was also the highest scoring third place team at the swim meet. The girls broke six school records as well.

"Swimming state isn't just about the records and great swims…it's the fact that all of the hard work pays off in that one weekend," Haifley said, after placing fifth in the 100 Breast, fourth in the 400 Free Relay, tenth in the 100 Free and second in the 200 Free Relay. "I loved all of it, especially when we were driving home. We had a rave on the bus with glow sticks and music and everything…it was so much fun. I'm going to miss the people; swimming for Homestead helped me become a better swimmer and I've loved it."

STATE '08 RECAP

The 13 girls on the state team scored 216 points, placing 3rd overall. The girls broke six total Homestead records and 17 medals were brought home. The last time the team placed 3rd was in 1997.

1. Emily Haifley (12) hugs Kristen Witham (12), Amy Gutwein (12) and McKenzie Bagan (11) after placing 4th in the 400 Free Relay. **2.** Tori Bagan (9) finished in 3rd in the 100 Breaststroke, achieving a national cut. **3.** Coach Chad Englehart talks to Emilee Keefer (11) and Kristen Kinzer (11) before the 50 Free Prelims on Friday night. **4.** Coach Candy Laux cheers along side Emeri Taivalkoski (10), Jessica Howard (12) and Sarah Noel (11). **5.** Mariah Kiefer (11) placed 12th in diving.

finishing in second

Of the twelve events in the State Finals, six Homestead swimmers captured the title as "Runner Up" in a total of three different events: 100 Fly, 500 Free and 200 Free Relay.

McKenzie Bagan
Grade: Junior
Event: 100 Butterfly
Time: 56.20

Emilee Keefer
Grade: Junior
Event: 200 Free Relay
Split: 24.28

Kristen Kinzer
Grade: Junior
Event: 200 Free Relay
Split: 24.60

Kristen Witham
Grade: Senior
Event: 500 Freestyle
Time: 5:03.24

Emily Haifley
Grade: Senior
Event: 200 Free Relay
Split: 24.31

Tori Bagan
Grade: Freshman
Event: 200 Free Relay
Split: 23.18

page 1B
issue 8 volume 38
homestead high school
4310 homestead road
fort wayne, indiana 46814

Sports

For the Fun

Intramurals bring together basketball players for the enjoyment of the game.
Photos on page 4B.

Don't Stop Believin'

Boys' swim, dive must hold on to that feelin' going into state

By Nick Arnold
Sports Editor

With sectionals rapidly approaching, and the prospect of a successful state tournament on the horizon, the boys' swim team is putting in some crucial preparation. After an entire season of morning practices, meets and invitationals, the team is preparing for the time of the season that really counts. For some individuals on the team, it is the pinnacle of the season.

"For those of us who are seniors, this is really the time we want to perform our strongest," Brian Graham (12) said. "It really is a crucial time."

As the team hits the water for both sectional preliminaries and sectionals, they can look towards their female counterparts for inspiration. Last weekend, the girls' team placed a strong third at the state competition; the milestone marked the first time the team had scored over two-hundred points in a meet. For the boys, it marks an extra incentive to perform well.

"We can't be beat by the girls," Ethan Radalia (12) said, jokingly.

Humor aside, both the boys' and girls' teams support each other throughout the post season. Because of the staggered nature of their schedules, it allows one team to cheer on the other and vice versa. For the upcoming sectional preliminaries and finals, this support proves to be an invaluable asset.

"For the girls' preliminaries, the South Side Natatorium was packed," Radalia said. "It was standing room only."

Chest painting and loud screams are several rituals both the boys and girls utilize to bolster team spirit.

"It's nice to see the same level of support coming from both teams," Radalia said. "After girls' sectionals, all of the boys had lost their voices."

Like the girls, the boys have the experience and success of Coach Chad Englehart to draw on as well. A former swimmer himself, Englehart has been coaching both teams for over a decade. All of that experience has been paying off with the current generation of swimmers.

"Chad has been able to test different methods to prepare us for the post season over the years," Zach Johnson (12) said.

One such method that has become fixed in the boys' practice regime is tapering. In the week leading up to sectionals and state, the team scales back the intensity of its practice for the sake of letting their bodies respond to the stress placed on them through an entire season of hard work.

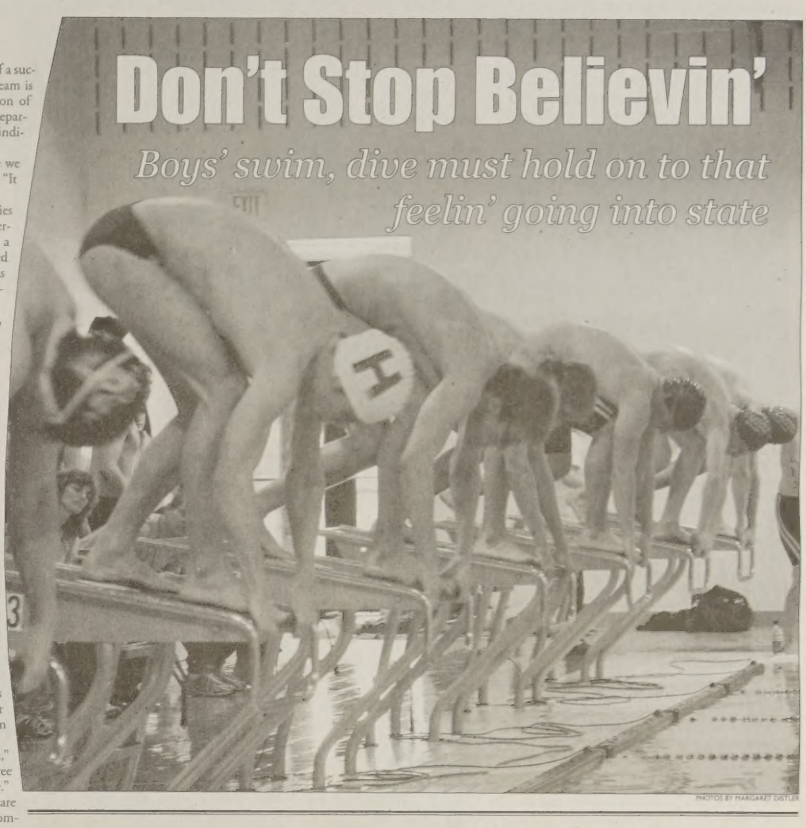
"Practices have definitely been less intense this week," Radalia said. "Last week we were swimming around three miles in two hours, whereas now we are down to about one."

After last year's top five performance at state, the boys are setting their standards high. With a state full of legitimate competition, these standards will prove elusive.

"We definitely want to do better than last year," Radalia said. "There are quite a few teams that are serious competition for us. Chesterton is coming in stronger every week, North Central is always powerful and Hamilton Southeastern is also proving to be competitive."

Those advancing to the state meet are determined by an average of the fastest times in the past years. The 16th place time averaged over the past three years serves as the time which determines those who advance. For the boys, these times are well within reach.

"We are confident we can make the times," Radalia said.



PHOTOS BY MARGARET DISTLER

"For those of us who are seniors, this is really the time we want to **perform our strongest**."

Brian Graham (12)
Varsity Swimmer

A Swimmer's End of the Season To Do List

The final weeks of the swim season mean the guys must continue the team traditions and follow through with their yearly 'to do' list before the weekend of the state finals in Indianapolis.

☑ Tread water with weights during circuit

☑ Play Rock Band at someone's house

☑ Have seniors coach the meet on Senior Night

☑ Cheer on girls' team at their Sectional Finals

Girls' basketball falls short with loss to South Side

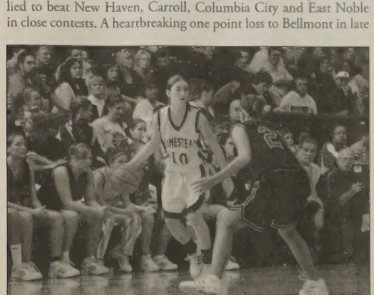
Spartans finish 10-10 on the season, pierced by Archers for third year in a row

By Kalyn Jorgensen
Writer

The past week brought culmination to the post season run of the girls' basketball team. After a noteworthy run at the conference title, the team finished their season on a high note off the court.

With ticket sales rapidly increasing, the Lady Spartans felt a rise in support for girls' basketball. The morale of the team had become even greater with the help of larger crowds. Uncommonly, the amount of spectators for the girls had surpassed the boys' team in a few instances.

The support of the viewers and hard work of the Lady Spartans helped them succeed in the conference standing. Prior to the season, the conference coaches collectively picked the team to finish in the lowest position. The group was displeased with their pre-season prediction and set out to prove the girls' basketball community wrong. After dropping their first conference game to Norwell, the pre-season favorite and eventual champion, the Lady Spartans rallied to beat New Haven, Carroll, Columbia City and East Noble in close contests. A heartbreaking one point loss to Bellmont in late January ended the winning streak, but they beat DeKalb handedly the next week to clinch their second place standing. After finishing in second place in the NHC with a record of 5-2, the team was very proud of themselves.



PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER

Above: Erin Quinn (12) looks for a teammate while dribbling. **Above Right:** Jena Hamrick (9) goes up for a layup against an Columbia City opponent. Hamrick led the team in assists and rebounds per game.

"Impressively, the team was able to accomplish this despite the lack of varsity experience the majority of the team held," Coach Rod Parker said. "I was pleased with the manner in which individuals on this team showed maturity and developed their skills as players, which resulted in a strong, competitive team."

The lack of varsity experience was due to multiple seniors who graduated the previous year. This left the team with openings for underclassmen to prove that they are varsity material. This year, tranfer Tori Rowe (11), participated in her first season of basketball as a Lady Spartan. Rowe moved to Fort Wayne over the summer so she was given the chance to get to know the team and adjust to the new program.

"This move was very difficult on me personally because I wasn't with my whole family and I didn't have any friends here yet," Rowe said.

Although she participated in summer conditioning activities with the team and made it through the vigorous tryouts, the season still brought challenges.

"Being new to a team, especially my junior year, brought a lot of difficulties," Rowe said. "It takes time to develop relationships, to establish a team chemistry on the court, find my place on the team, and learn how everything works in a new program."

As the season continued and the team became closer, Rowe felt more comfortable. She began gaining knowledge and skills with the help of her coaches and teammates.

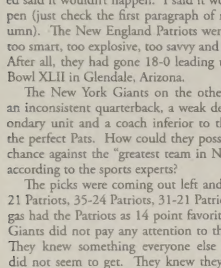
"My experiences with the team were very positive," Rowe said. "Basketball has provided many friendships that I never otherwise would have had, and the more I play, especially on a new team, the more I realize how much more there is too learn. Playing on a new team has shed light on parts of the game not emphasized to me in the past. I've also really learned about the power of a team over the individual."

With the NHC completed, the team moved on to the sectional tournament. The Lady Spartan's drew the most challenging team in their sectional, South Side. The team played Tuesday, Feb. 5, and gave the Archers a little more than they bargained for. Behind the strong three point shooting of Kendra Dyson (10), Jena Hamrick (9), and Erin Quinn (12), and the tough inside play from Terraysha Gordon (10), the Lady Spartans trailed the state-ranked South Side team by fourteen at halftime. After gathering themselves during the break, the girls emerged with a rousing rally to capitalizing on stifling defensive stops. Without South Side's suffocating full court trap, the Lady Spartans pulled within two points of the Archers midway through the third quarter. However, the Archers answered with a streak of their own to pull away for good. The Lady Spartans' season ended in the gym at Huntington North with the 59-45 loss.

"The greatest thing that I have gained from this season is how important it is to respect one another as we work for common goals," Parker said. "These players are great people who have been able to form a special bond through dedication, heart and determination. Hopefully, they have created memories that they will take with them as they [pursue] their goals."

The NHC coaches conveined again once the season was over to vote on the All-Conference teams. Dyson and Hmarick were elected First Team, Quinn Second, and Gordon Honorable Mention.

New York Giants Football provides win for underdogs



By Chris Ray
Sports Editor

There I sat, in an electronics store with ten different high definition televisions tuned into the same program. I couldn't believe it. With a full stomach of pizza, wings, cookies, chips, salsa and an assortment of other goodies, I sat there and looked on in amazement.

The clock read 35 seconds to go, the team in white was bouncing up and down on the sidelines, the coach in red had a stare that not even Norv Turner could beat, and the quarterback in blue looked bruised and beaten. What I had hoped for but never thought possible was actually now becoming a reality. My heartbeat increased with each second coming off the clock. First play: incomplete pass. Second play: sacked. Third play: incomplete. Fourth play: incomplete. It was over. They had done it. I celebrated with my friends, high-fived, yelled obnoxiously, ran out into the snow in my bare feet and realized that I had just witnessed something special. I glanced back at the HDTVs to see the score once more. New York Giants: 17, New England Patriots: 14.

ESPN said it wouldn't happen. Sports Illustrated said it wouldn't happen. I said it wouldn't happen (just check the first paragraph of my last column). The New England Patriots were too good, too smart, too explosive, too savvy and too perfect. After all, they had gone 18-0 leading up to Super Bowl XLII in Glendale, Arizona.

The New York Giants on the other hand had an inconsistent quarterback, a weak defensive secondary unit and a coach inferior to the coach of the perfect Pats. How could they possibly stand a chance against the "greatest team in NFL history" according to the sports experts?

The picks were coming out left and right. 42-21 Patriots, 35-24 Patriots, 31-21 Patriots. Las Vegas had the Patriots as 14 point favorites. Yet, the Giants did not pay any attention to these experts. They knew something everyone else in America did not seem to get. They knew they could beat these Patriots. They believed in their 'inconsistent quarterback, weak defensive secondary and inferior coach.' When sports journalists would ask them, "How are you going to stop the Patriots?" these Giants would say, "We're going to play New York Giants football."

As the big game approached, the media paid more attention to Tom Brady's walking boot, Randy Moss's abuse of a woman, the Spygate controversy and Bill Belichek's unflappable personality. And that is just the way the Giants liked it. These Giants were flying under the radar while the Patriots were a major blip. While the Patriots were dealing with the aforementioned controversies, the Giants were preparing for this so-called unstoppable offense and stingy defense. The Giants even started to show off their confidence. Plaxico Burress guaranteed a 23-17 victory for the G-men. Tom Brady seemed to find that guarantee funny. His response to the guarantee? "We're only going to score 17 points? Ok."

Yet, as the game started, it was apparent that this game wasn't going to be a typical New England blowout. These Giants were for real. They played with a chip on their shoulder and a hatred for the Patriots. They weren't intimidated by Tom Brady, Bill Belichek, Randy Moss or Tedy Bruschi. They didn't care about their 13-6 record compared to the Patriots' 18-0 record. They didn't care that the 1972 Dolphins were counting on them to beat to the Pats so they could pop open the champagne for the 36th time together. All they cared about was playing New York Giants football.

They hung in with the Patriots throughout the first half, trailing 7-3 at halftime. The score remained the same at the end of the third quarter. Up to that point, New York Giants football seemed to have the edge over New England Patriots in all aspects besides the score. The defense was shutting down Tom Brady, sacking him on various occasions and forcing terrible throws. In the fourth quarter, the offense was starting to figure out this 'stingy Patriots defense' as they scored a touchdown to go up 10-7. However, the Patriots came back and moved the ball like they did all season and scored a touchdown to go ahead 14-10. At that point, I thought the game was over. The Patriots had showed all season long that they have what it takes to close out games, and this game was 2:45 away from being over.

But the Giants knew it wasn't over. They put the ball into the hands of Eli Manning, their 'inconsistent quarterback' and let him lead the team to an improbable comeback. As I watched the final drive unfold, it was apparent to me that the Giants wanted it just a little bit more than the Patriots. One play showed this thought more than any other: The Helmet Catch. The escape by Eli Manning, the heave down the field, and the one-handed, one-helmet catch by David Tyree; that play had it all. I have never jumped so high after a sports play in my life. It was surreal. And finally, as an Eli Manning pass fell into the hands of Plaxico Burress in the back of the end zone, New York Giants football had succeeded.

Tom Coughlin, the 'inferior coach' had led his team to a Super Bowl victory after being criticized all year. The 'weak defensive secondary' had held the Patriots to 14 points. Who's laughing now, Tom? Then there's Eli Manning, brother of Peyton Manning, who followed in the family footsteps and won a Super Bowl MVP. In the post-game press conference, the Giants didn't look surprised at the outcome. Plaxico Burress had joined Joe Namath as a Super Prophet, and sports journalists were probably wondering why they didn't ask the Patriots how they were going to stop the Giants.

This game showed that a 13-6 team can beat an 18-0 team. The New York Giants played football the way they had all season, and it gave them a ring and the Vince Lombardi trophy. Wait, is that the sound of champagne corks popping in Miami?

Gymnastic team still hard at work

Leading state win record difficult to maintain

By Andrew Weiss
Writer

While the basketball teams and wresting teams have almost completed their post-seasons, the gymnastic team is still hard at work trying to improve their floor routines, uneven bar skills and other high school gymnastic events.

From September to March ten female gymnasts work on perfecting their specific event and help the Lady Spartan gymnastics team improve from practice to practice. Although the season is fairly long, the girls still enjoy competing and practicing together.

"So far it's been a pretty busy and jam-packed season, but I'm still enjoying myself and the team I think is too," Katie Crewse (10), who competes in floor routines, said.

With two seniors, two juniors, five sophomores and one freshman, the team is very young and inexperienced. Although experience is lacking, the leadership on the team is certainly not.

"Kristin Chenoweth (12) and Chelsey Williams (11) show the greatest leadership on our team because of the amount of effort they put into [practice]," Cara Pepperman (9), who competes in floor, vault and bars competitions, said.

> *"So far it's been a pretty busy and jam-packed season, but I'm still enjoying myself and the team I think is too."*
>
> Katie Crewese
> Sophmore

With the youth on the team, the younger girls rely on older and more experienced gymnasts to teach and lead by example.

Crwese agreed, "Krissy Chenoweth and Chelsey Williams both show a lot of leadership on this team."

While most people find gymnastics and winter cheer very similar, many Homestead gymnasts disagree with this statement.

"The only thing [cheerleading and gymnastics] have in common is tumbling, a small part of gymnastics. Each and every person on the team contributes to the team's score, which is how they are similar," Allie Quintano (10), who competes in floor, said.

Experience coming into Homestead gymnastics is hard to find considering there are school gymnastic teams at the middle school level.

"…It's all up to girls who really want to do gymnastics that take classes at the gymnastics gyms around the area that want to Homestead gymnastics," Quintano said.

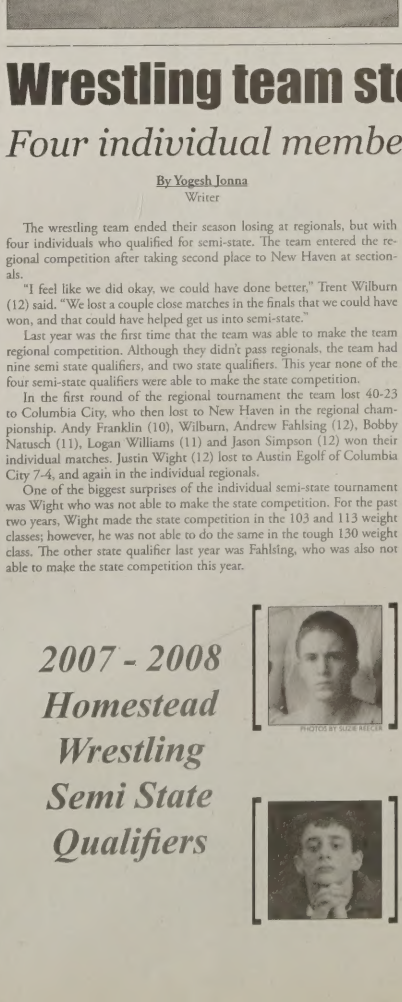
According to digitalsports.com, the Indiana Girls Gymnastics site, five of twenty-three of the best teams are from Fort Wayne. Bishop Dwenger (ranked 3rd), Concordia (9th), Carroll (11th), Snider (19th) and Northrop (20th) are the ranked teams from the Fort Wayne area.

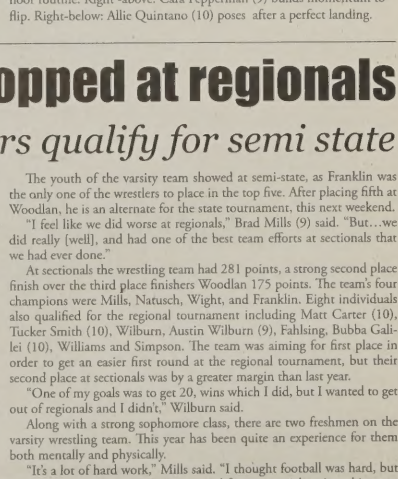
Current gymnastics teams at Homestead are trying duplicate recent success that won state tournaments in 1983, 1984, 1985, 1996, 1999 and 2001. Homestead leads all high schools with six gymnastics state championships. The team has also won regionals nine times and won sectionals ten times. Last year the team finished eighth out of fifteen teams in sectionals and did not advance to regionals.

While this year's team is young and struggling, having won just one meet, they are most defiantly having a good time learning new skills in attempt improve and place well at sectionals.

The team did place well in the Chesterton Invitational, placing 4th out seven of teams. The team is currently preparing for their sectional at Concordia Lutheran on Mar. 1. Advancing to regionals will be a tough task considering state ranked teams Bishop Dwenger, Concordia, Snider and Northrop.

"It's always fun to learn new things and perfect old things you have learned," Chloe Smith (10) said. "Our coaches are a lot of fun too, they show us some of their skills sometimes."





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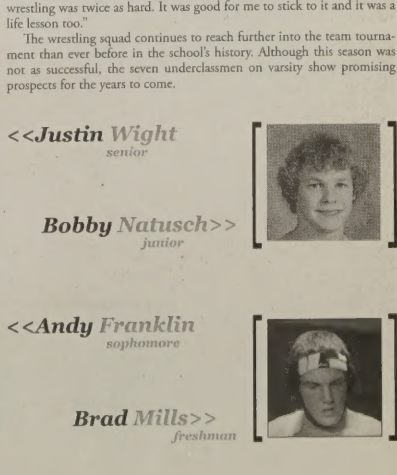


Left: Katie Crewese (10) reaches up to earn extra points at the end of a floor routine. Right -above: Cara Pepperman (9) builds momentum to flip. Right-below: Allie Quintano (10) poses after a perfect landing.

Wrestling team stopped at regionals

Four individual members qualify for semi state

By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

The wrestling team ended their season losing at regionals, but with four individuals who qualified for semi-state. The team entered the regional competition after taking second place to New Haven at sectionals.

"I feel like we did okay, we could have done better," Trent Wilburn (12) said. "We lost a couple close matches in the finals that we could have won, and that could have helped get us into semi-state."

Last year was the first time that the team was able to make the team regional competition. Although they didn't pass regionals, the team had nine semi state qualifiers, and two state qualifiers. This year none of the four semi-state qualifiers were able to make the state competition.

In the first round of the regional tournament the team lost 40-23 to Columbia City, who then lost to New Haven in the regional championship. Andy Franklin (10), Wilburn, Andrew Fahlsing (12), Bobby Natusch (11), Logan Williams (11) and Jason Simpson (12) won their individual matches. Justin Wight (12) lost to Austin Egolf of Columbia City 7-4, and again in the individual regionals.

One of the biggest surprises of the individual semi-state tournament was Wight who was not able to make the state competition. For the past two years, Wight made the state competition in the 103 and 113 weight classes; however, he was not able to do the same in the tough 130 weight class. The other state qualifier last year was Fahlsing, who was also not able to make the state competition this year.

The youth of the varsity team showed at semi-state, as Franklin was the only one of the wrestlers to place in the top five. After placing fifth at Woodlan, he is an alternate for the state tournament, this next weekend.

"I feel like we did worse at regionals," Brad Mills (9) said. "But…we did really [well], and had one of the best team efforts at sectionals that we had ever done."

At sectionals the wrestling team had 281 points, a strong second place finish over the third place finishers Woodlan 175 points. The team's four champions were Mills, Natusch, Wight, and Franklin. Eight individuals also qualified for the regional tournament including Matt Carter (10), Tucker Smith (10), Wilburn, Austin Wilburn (9), Fahlsing, Bubba Galilei (10), Williams and Simpson. The team was aiming for first place in order to get an easier first round at the regional tournament, but their second place at sectionals was by a greater margin than last year.

"One of my goals was to get 20, wins which I did, but I wanted to get out of regionals and I didn't," Wilburn said.

Along with a strong sophomore class, there are two freshmen on the varsity wrestling team. This year has been quite an experience for them both mentally and physically.

"It's a lot of hard work," Mills said. "I thought football was hard, but wrestling was twice as hard. It was good for me to stick to it and it was a life lesson too."

The wrestling squad continues to reach further into the team tournament than ever before in the school's history. Although this season was not as successful, the seven underclassmen on varsity show promising prospects for the years to come.

2007 - 2008 Homestead Wrestling Semi State Qualifiers

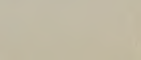
PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER

<<Justin Wight
senior

Bobby Natusch>>
junior

<<Andy Franklin
sophomore

Brad Mills>>
freshman



A letter from the mind of the Mighty Quinn

Dear Basketball,

We had 24 seconds left in the second half when I lunged for the steal. Unfortunately, I bobbled the interception and lost control of the ball mere steps after I snatched it. Fortunately, Kendra Dyson (10) scooped the ball off of the floor at a dead run and sped to the basket with clumsy self in tow – just in case. Unfortunately, she misfired and the pebbled sphere skirted off the rim and out of my reach. Fortunately, Terraysha Gordon (10) leaped for the rebound and kissed a mid-range jumper off of the glass. Unfortunately, the glass directed the ball down into the path of the oncoming Jena Hamrick (9), who flew out of bounds trying to save the possession.

By Erin Quinn
Co-Editor-In-Chief

The play that transpired captured the spirit of our entire season. No matter how hard we tried or how much we covered for each other, almost every time an opportunity or a stroke of good luck came along, misfortune or error followed. It seemed like each time we executed a play beautifully, four calls, shots or possessions did not go our way.

We struggle through. We weathered the storm of losing players, suffering injuries, playing two state-ranked teams in the first eight games. We found unexpected leaders. We moved on. We won 10 games and played 10 others tough. We learned, we grew, we conquered. We lost, but ultimately we won. We earned respect and a gained a reputation. I could not be more proud of the team we had this year or more grateful of my time with them.

Some people don't even like girls' basketball, or even sports in general. They're missing a story filled with courage and adventure that they just have to take the time to look for. While our team may not have been worth our weight in state medals or even conference championships (though we were close), we were entertaining.

Tired sports clichés aside, I learned a few lessons over the course of the season. You essentially took me to school. I learned to hand out second chances like assists and to trust myself. I realized that you're only as forgiving and trusting as I am. It's a bittersweet feeling to close this chapter of my life. I know I'll move on--I'll go to college and find other ways to occupy my time. Until then, I'll stay busy trying not to stay busy. Maybe I'll even start doing my homework. Now that's a new kind of sad.

The question becomes not what I will do without you, but what will I do with your leftovers. Do I wear my striped, game day knee-high socks to professional interviews for good luck? What of my extensive collection of t-shirts that don't have sleeves, or multiple frayed ankle braces, the piles of high top sneakers that have accumulated in my closet? No one else could possibly want the used reminders of defensive slide drills and hours upon hours of work. Now that you're gone, I don't need them anymore.

This means no more mixed CDs to get hyped to. After all, why do I need pump up music after my playing days are over--to wake me up to in the morning before standing mindlessly in a line for the daily coffee? I don't even drink coffee. No more shopping for basketball shorts, no more running waiters refilling glasses of water at team dinners, no more Sundays in the dark, cavernous gym when it was just you, me and the basket. Those are the things I will miss.

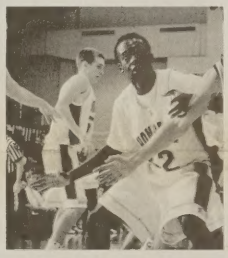
Not only will I look back fondly upon this specific group of players, but on a broader scale, I'll miss the people I met along the way – the coaches, fans and athletes who taught, inspired and even prodded me to where I am today. I'd like think every free throw I sunk or defensive stop I made was a direct result from my own work, but I know that such accomplishments should be attributed to those who got the two of us together and led me to the point where I could shout "SPARTANS ON THREE" and dance to Soulja Boy with 15-pound dumbbells.

It is these memories that I will carry. You don't mean very much to a lot of people, but you do to me. Now I'm left to face the dreary weather without you by my side. For the first time, it's all on me. Farewell, for now, my dear companion. You'll always have my love.

Sincerely,
The Mighty Quinn

PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH RECKER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ERIN QUINN

Newly crowned NHC champs face final two games



Top: Chase Sanders (12) dribbles downcourt against Norwell. Above: Jay Curry (10) fights for position between two defenders. Below: "Sea of Blue" students react to an official's call.

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

All season long, the Spartans were all about exceeding expectations. A young, inexperienced team set high expectations at the start of the season. Local sports stations at the beginning of the season predicted a 4th place finish in the Northeast Hoosier Conference for the Spartans. The team ignored their critics and fought through the adversity to stake a share of the NHC title.

After a tough road loss to DeKalb, the team felt their opportunity at a conference title had gone out the door. The Spartans knew in order for them to win at least a share of the title, they would need a lot of help from other teams. With two conference games remaining against New Haven and Norwell, and DeKalb left to face Carroll and Belmont, the team first had to take care of their business and hope for a fault by the Barons.

> *"We felt like we had let the chance to win conference slip away."*
>
> Dave Osborn (12)
> Varsity Player

"After the DeKalb game everyone was disappointed," said David Osborn (12) "We felt like we had let the chance to win conference slip away."

Luckily for the Spartans, opportunity came knocking on Senior Night. After the team did their part in beating New Haven easily on their home floor, Coach Chris Johnson received word that DeKalb had gotten beat by Carroll. When hearing the news, the Spartans now found themselves with new life to claim a conference title, their first since 1998.

"We knew after losing to DeKalb we would have to get help and make sure we did our own business," said Coach Johnson "We got some luck when Carroll beat DeKalb."

Tied for the NHC title, the Spartans and DeKalb both needed wins in the conference finale. The team would go up against a tough Norwell team that can control the tempo of a game very easily. Just days before the game against the Knights, a tragedy struck Northern Wells county when a senior at Norwell was killed by an accidental gunshot. The Spartans knew the chances of Norwell rallying and playing with heavy emotion and heavy hearts would be very likely.

"We knew they were going to come out hard like they always do," Johnson said "We got down early but we were able to fight under adversity."

To further extend the meaning of "home court advantage", the student section created a "sea of blue" by wearing Spartan blue to help cheer on the team. For once, the student body was there to support the team.

The Spartans overcame a slow start against Norwell after being down by as many as 12 points. In the late stages of the game, the team controlled the game and sealed the deal with a 4 point win, and winning the NHC crown. Picked to finish 4th in conference, the Spartans won it.

The season is still far from over, which means more expectations and accomplishments. The team wraps up the regular season with match-ups against Summit Athletic Conferencepowers Snider and Northrup. After the regular season, the Spartans will wait for the sectional pairings to be released and begin the state tournament.

Overcoming adversity is only a small part of what this team has accomplished this season. For how young the team was, they were able to play as a team and rally around one another. Winning conference gives this team even more experience and momentum heading into the final stretch of the season. They could be poised for a deep tournament run.

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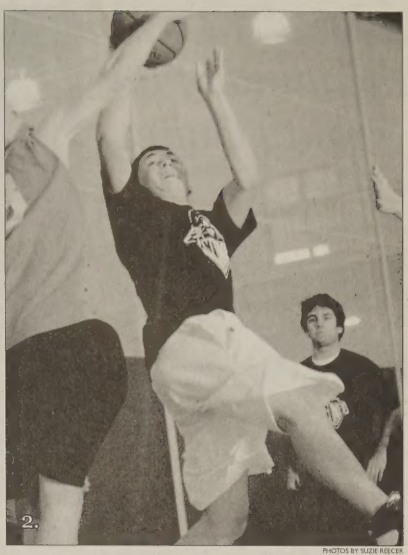
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PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER

Not quite varsity, not quite for fun, but...

For the love of the game

Intramural basketball season heats up, near playoffs

By Collin McCracken
Guest Writer

As the clock ticks down, Brandon Derek (12) brings the ball up the court, shoots a three, and scores! However, the whistle blows as the ref waves off the shot. The clock hit zero before the shot was released. Game over. The Rumpelstiltskins defeat the Goombas 69-68 in an overtime thriller.

In the world of Homestead Intramural Basketball, this kind of dramatic finish is a regular sight to any spectators taking in the action at the Jorgensen YMCA. Consisting of 16 teams, intramural basketball has been a longstanding tradition at Homestead over the years. With games played on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during the cold weeks of winter, these teams come to play the game of basketball for the love of the game. And if the team is good enough, they may even come away with the championship and a year's worth of bragging rights.

"I play because of the thrilling excitement of playing intramural basketball," Chris "Lunchmeat" Jorgensen (12) said.

In any sports league, there are always teams that stand out above the rest. In the minds of many athletes and students around Homestead, the Goombas and Abusement Park are the two teams to beat in this year's intramural league.

The Goombas, who are led by former Spartan basketball player Tracy Hathaway (12), have a lot of experience and athletic ability. Up until the game against the Rumpelstitskins, the Goombas were undefeated in intramural play. Hathaway (12) leads the team in scoring with 19.3 points per game. Other players with experience include Ryan Wright (12), Kyle Newcomb (12), and Jon Repka (12).

Another top-tier team is the Rumpelstiltskins. Led by former Spartan basketball players Logan Laughlin (11), Jordan Barnes (11), and Chuckie Weaver (11), the 'Skins are 3-2. Their biggest win came against the previously undefeated Goombas. With two scorers in the top ten, Laughlin at 19.3 points per game and Weaver at 14.3 points per game, the 'Skins have the firepower to contend with anyone, as they showed against the Goombas.

However, the team that seems to be the team to beat in this year's intramural season is Abusement Park. Led by Jorgensen (12) and Bob Glover (12), the top two leading scorers in the league, Abusement Park is the only remaining undefeated team left.

With the outside game of Glover complimenting the inside play of Jorgensen, who is averaging over 20 points per game, Abusement Park will be difficult for anyone to beat. Jorgensen has proven himself to be one of the toughest players in the league this year.

"It's a great honor to be considered one of the greatest players in intramural basketball history, said Jorgensen (12).

Other teams to look out for include the Hemoglobin Trotters, Pink Socks, and the Wet Boyz (Daisies). With a lot of talent of their own, these teams could possibly pose a threat to the juggernauts of the Homestead Intramural Basketball league come tournament time. However, even players on these teams know they will have to face some stiff competition to win the championship.

"I think Abusement Park is the best team in the league, mostly because of the inside game of Chris Jorgensen," Brandon "Bubba" Smith (11) said.

The tournament, which is a single elimination tournament, is where the best teams are showcased. Much like the madness of March, this tournament can be grueling and oftentimes extremely tough. Depending on the tournament draw and the quality of a teams play, the win-or-go-home setup can bring out some Cinderella teams.

"I don't know how my team (Pink Socks) will do. It depends on who we draw and also on how well we play," Smith (11) said.

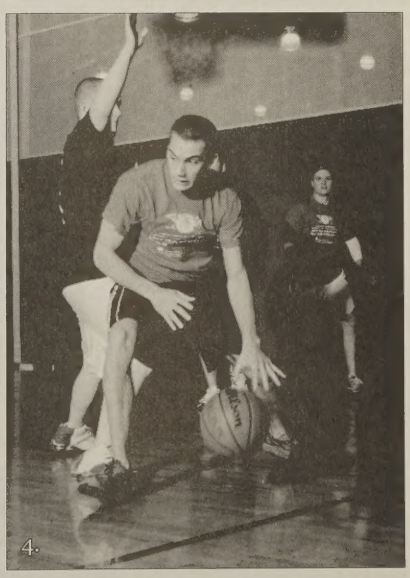
As everyone knows, only one team can be crowned the 2008 Homestead Intramural Champions. Whether the winning team is Abusement Park, Goombas, Pink Socks or the Rumpelstiltskins, one thing is for certain; bragging rights and 'We are the champions' chants will be heard throughout the halls of Homestead.

INTRAMURAL TEAM NAMES

Abusement Park	4-0
The Goombas	4-1
Black Tears	3-1
Rumpelstiltskins	3-2
Daisies	3-2
Pink Socks	3-2
Dufflebag Boys	2-2
Tulips	2-2
Hemoglobin Trotters	2-2
Tap Out	2-2
Dandelions	2-3
Engines That Could	2-3
The Mad Mans	2-3
Team Simonis	1-3
Individuals	0-3
Snowmans	0-4

**Standings as of Wednesday evening

3.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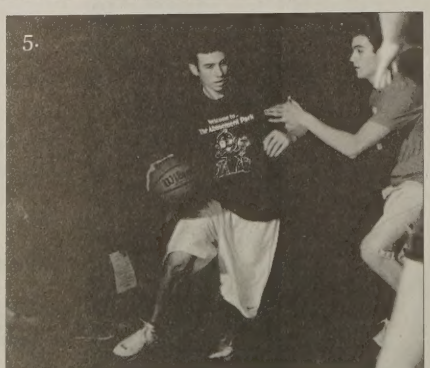
LEADING SCORERS

Chris Jorgensen (Abusement Park)	20.67
Colin Pyle (Hemoglobin Trotters)	19.67
Logan Laughlin (Rumpelstiltskins)	19.33
Tracy Hathaway (The Goombas)	19.33
Joel Sluyter (Hemoglobin Trotters)	18.67
Tony Hicks (Pink Socks)	17.33
Jeff Roby (Team Simonis)	15.0
Ryan Stokes (Individuals)	15.0
Chuck Weaver (Rumpelstiltskins)	14.33
Kyle Beutler (Pink Socks)	14.33

**Standings as of January 31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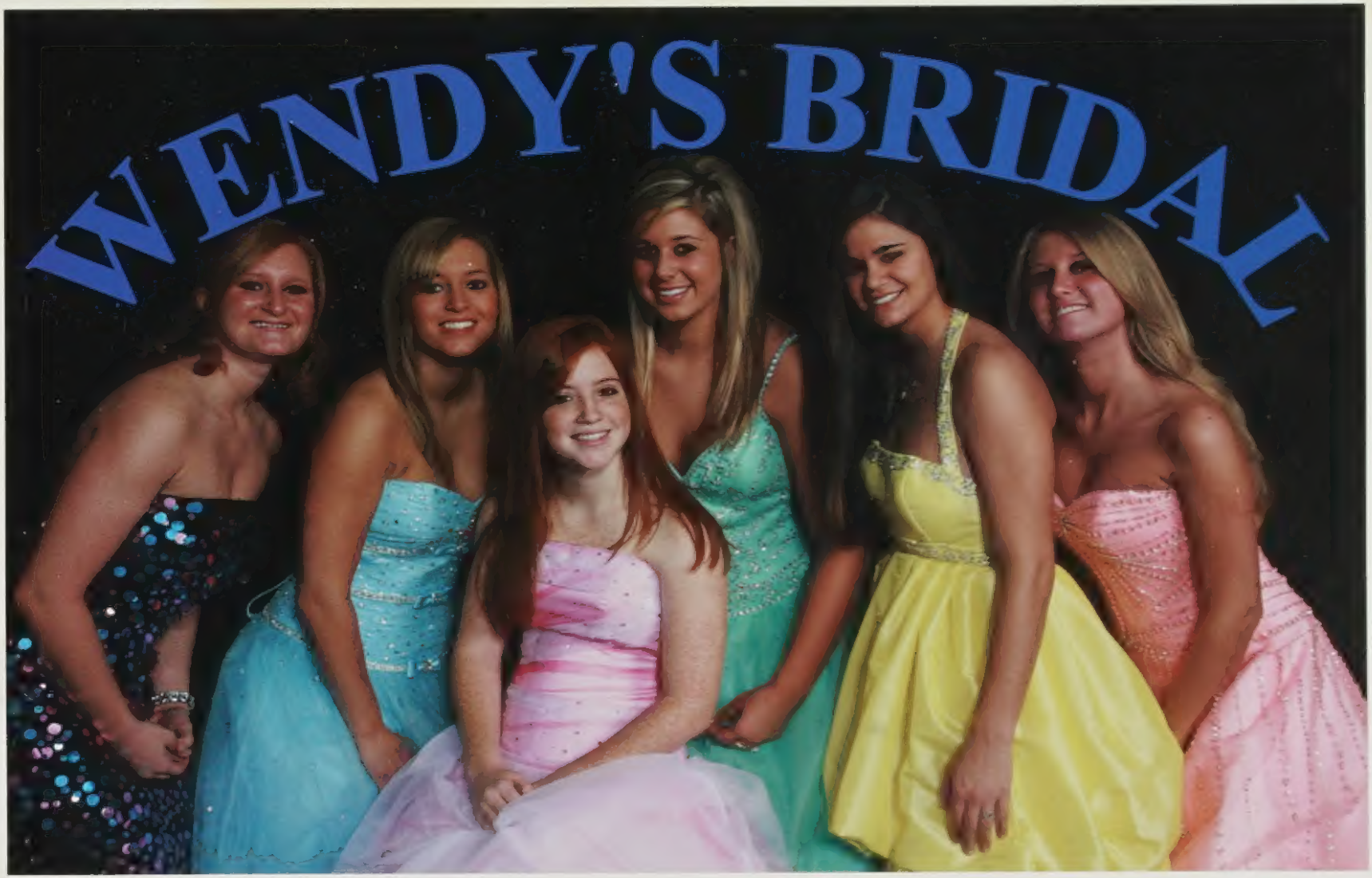
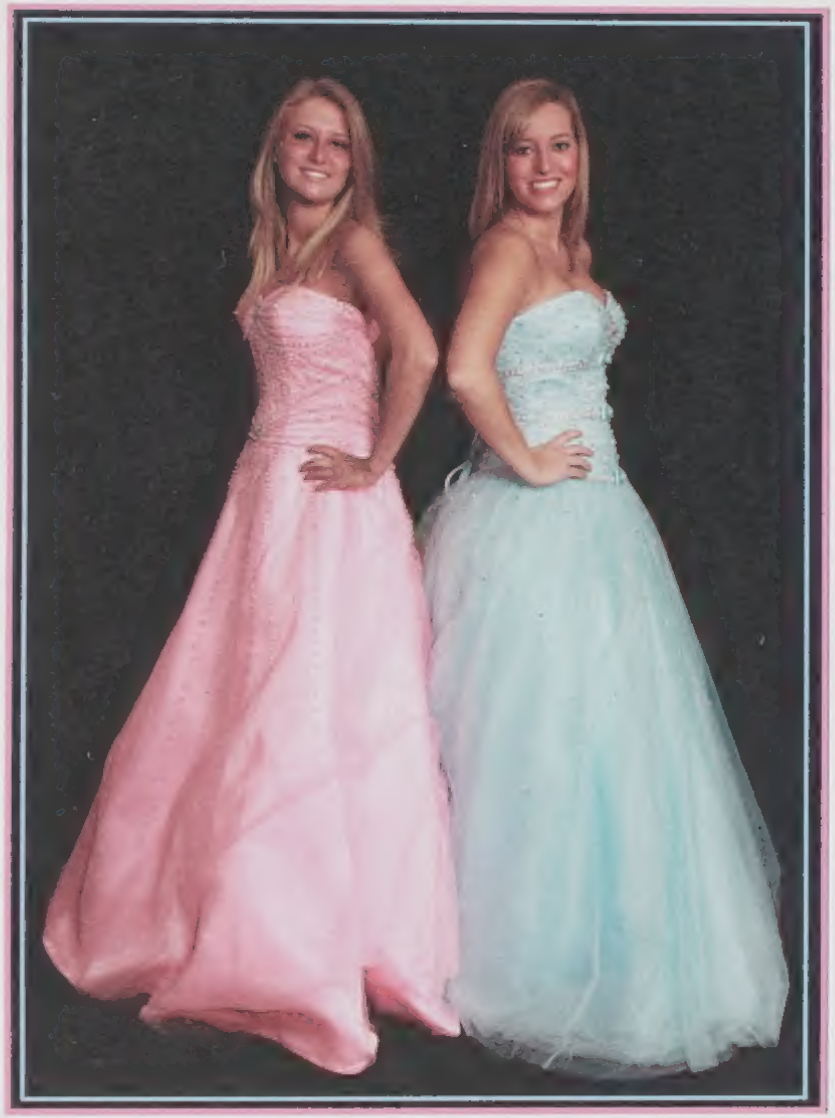
1. Jon Repka (12) tightly defends Logan Laughlin (11) in the game between the Goombas and the Rumpelstiltskins. 2. Cody O'Neal (10) goes up for a shot.3. Justin Hanford (10), Zach Mettler (10), Cody O'Neal (10) and Daniel Deschner (10) eye the ball suspended in mid-air during the Duffle Bag Boys and Engines That Could matchup. Mettler and Hanford are wearing the tradition league shirts, while O'Neal and Deschner are sporting one of the few specialty designed shirts in the league. 4. Joel Sluyter (11) makes a move to the hoop along the baseline despite defensive pressure from an Abusement Park member. 5. Bob Glover (12) weaves around defenders, including Luke Berghoff (11). on his way to the basket. Glover is one of the intramural league's players who has Spartan varsity basketball experience.


WENDY'S BRIDAL



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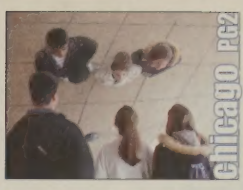
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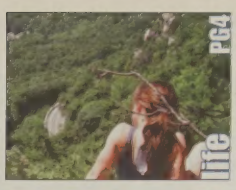
life PG4

sports PG6

Friday, March 28, 2008

COST OF EDUCATION QUICKLY PILES UP

The cost of education goes beyond just paying for textbook fees; other miscellaneous items are required to fulfill the necessities of the average student. Simple school items, seen above, tally up to a big check.

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

When Tarun Jain (11) peels open the front page of his test booklet on the morning of Monday, May 11 with freshly sharpened pencils in hand and a school year's worth of college-level academics under his belt, he will have one less thing to worry about. Instead, the tab for his AP Biology exam, which regularly sets students back $84.00, will be picked up by the Indiana Department of Education.

The state first began funding selected exams in 1999 in order to "encourage increased enrollment" in Advanced Placement math and science classes, according to DOE AP Program Coordinator Becky Kennedy. Nine years later, the results, as reflected in the College Board's Indiana reports, have proven to be positive: statewide participation in exams funded by the DOE has increased by an annual average of 7.55%.

The financial aspect of the College Board's rigorous courses remains a deterrent to prospective test-takers, though. Even Jain, who has spent over $160 in his past two years of high school on AP exams, believes that certain students may reconsider taking the tests if their cost was on the house.

"[The tests] are sort of expensive, but there's a lot of work that goes into the classes," Jain said, "and compared to college courses, it's a lot cheaper."

In a country where $84.00 can fill two tanks of gasoline, Advanced Placement exams are only the tip of the iceberg to many students. School lunches, parking permits and textbooks — all payments not included in property taxes — are becoming issues of debate between both students and faculty.

"These costs are definitely a problem," Indy Singh (10) said.

As the American economy slumps into what three-quarters of the

SEE COST on page 2A

in loving memory of

stephaun kee

1990-2008

On Sunday, Mar. 2, Stephaun Kee closed his eyes for the last time. Born with cerebral palsy and a severe case of scoliosis Stephaun struggled, spending years in and out of hospitals. However, he did so with a smile, a smile that warmed the hearts of those around him. For those close to Stephaun, their memory of him is marked by happiness and his famous sense of humor.

"He was the most special thing in my life. The way he smiled could make you forget you were angry; just being around him makes you forget about everything." -Aaron Kee (10), Brother

"Stephaun was a sweet, gentle child who is greatly missed in our classroom. He had a smile that would light up any room. It was his way of rewarding us for time spent with him. He was patient, quiet, and loving towards others. It was a great loss for our program."

-Martha Lute, Teacher

"He made everything fun. It's just different without him.... He always would smile. His smile was so cute and his eyes were so big. You could tell he was happy." -Stephanie Kee (11), Sister

BRIEFS

NHS COFFEE HOUSE

The National Honor Society will be holding a Spring Coffee House on Friday, Apr. 25 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.It will be held in the Homestead Commons. There is no fee to enter, but there will be coffee and refreshments available for purchase. There will be music groups performing and other entertainment from Homestead and the local area. This will all be held in order to provide students with a fun event while at the same time raising funds for the National Honor Society.

'THE PAJAMA GAME'

This year's spring musical takes place in a pajama factory, hence the name of the musical, 'TRhe Pajama Game'. It tells the love story of the superintendent named Sid Sorokin, played by Alex Tordi (12), and the Head of the Grievance Committee named Babe Williams, played by Lori Panyard (12). The factory workers have been trying to achieve a seven and a half cents raise but continue to be denied it by the boss Hasler, played by Cale Royer (12). This fight for the raise puts Sid and Babe at opposite ends of the feud making their love not always easy. Other characters like Hines, played by Tyler Coulson (12), and Gladys, played by Katie O'Keefe (12), make the lovers' relationship even more complicated by adding jealousy to it all. Someone will have to compromise in order to make it work.

SADD EAT 'N' DRIVE

The annual Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Eat and Drive will be held at in the front corner of the Homestead parking lot on Apr. 24. Chicken will go on sale at 2:30 p.m., but the actual even begins at 4:00 p.m. and lasts until 7:00 p.m. The event is in need of bands and will pay $100 dollars to two bands to perform a 45 minute set. Anyone who is interested should see Mrs. Karen Hirschy in room 516 and bring a demo CD or set up an audition time.

MIRADOR COFFEE HOUSE

The Mirador Coffee House fundraiser will no longer be held on Apr. 10. Rescheduling the event is still under discussion. However, Mirador subscribers can still expect to receive the fourth issue later this school year.

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PAGE 5A, Life: Profile, Volunteering
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PAGE 7A, Sports: March Madness, Girls Track
PAGE 8A, Photo Essay:Spring Break

SACS teacher salaries rank higher than national average

By Celia Grundman
Writer

Education Week, a non-profit organization, recently published reports ranking and grading states on their education systems. For teacher salaries, Indiana was found to be among only 10 other states where the pay was considered to be either equal or higher than comparable jobs. Still, issues regarding teachers' salaries overall continue.

"One concern several have cited over the past few years is a lack of talented and qualified young people choosing education as a career because of higher paying positions and other fringe benefits offered in the private sector," Justin Peeper, Spanish teacher, said.

Indiana's teachers' salaries are better than in other states, but the state is losing possible teachers to professions such as special education and speech pathology, according to deputy director of the Indiana State Teachers Association Dan Clark.

"I think we, as a society, just need to make sure we continue to make teaching an appealing position so that the profession continues to attract highly qualified people to educate posterity. Part of that is through compensation, but there are also other factors," Peeper said.

Furthermore, Education Week's report, called Quality Counts, found that throughout the entire nation that teacher salaries are more compressed than in other professions; this means that teachers have a lesser chance of earning above-average salaries than people who work in other areas.

"Quality teaching matters more to student learning than anything else schools do. Yet the importance of teachers is not adequately reflected in either their salaries or their career trajectories over time, and it is clear that states could be doing far more to address the issue," Christopher B. Swanson, Research Center director, said.

As for Southwest Allen County, teacher salaries are slightly higher compared to Indiana overall. For the 2006-2007 school year Southwest Allen County teachers made an average of $51,940 compared to the state average of $47,832 according to the Indiana Department of Education, and salaries have steadily risen over the years.

"In one of my first three years of teaching [when at Bellmont] my salary was $6400, which included the higher salary scale for teachers with a Master's degree," English teacher Jean Ehrman, who has been teaching for 21 years, said.

For the 2007-2008 school year Homestead teachers have an average experience of 16.3 years, and teachers with more experience have higher salaries.

"Salaries certainly increase with experience, hitting a ceiling at 17 or 18

SEE SALARIES on page 2A

JCL finishes 2nd at state competition

About 30 students represented Homestead in the Junior Classical League (JCL) state competition the weekend of Mar. 14. The team placed second at the event, which was held at IU Bloomington. Below: Lee Farnsworth (12), David Ramsey (11) and Ravi Vemula (10) compete against other upper Certamen participants. The trio won first.

PHOTO BY IAN HAMILTON

Kuhn awarded Lily grant

By Ashley Heath
Writer

Rodney Kuhn, journalism teacher and *Spartana* advisor, was recently awarded an $8,000 Lilly grant which will allow him to rediscover a country, a people and himself.

In his "search for Americana" Kuhn will follow U.S. Route 40, a highway that intersects many major state capitals, including Jefferson City, Annapolis, Columbus and Salt Lake City.

He plans to start his five-week trip in Atlantic City, New Jersey and drive up to four days a week, spending the remaining time exploring towns, attractions and logging his trek across America on a website, featuring photos, videos and stories of his visits.

"Whatever strikes me as being interesting or different or new, something that people would be interested in, that's where I'll stop and get the story," Kuhn said.

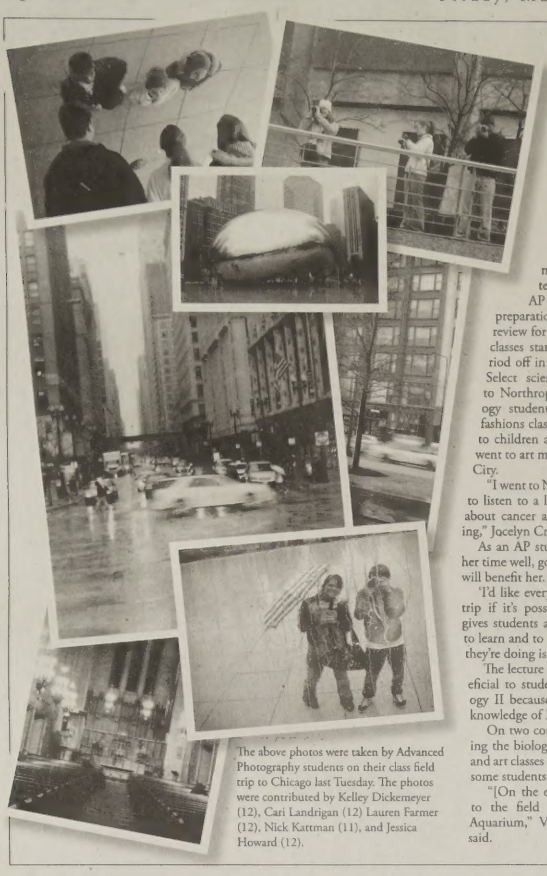
Kuhn hopes to use this experience as an opportunity to hone his skills as a writer, designer and photographer.

"I have spent 26 years basically helping kids tell their stories or help

SEE KUHN on page 2A

Learning the field

Recent field trips enrich education, help students learn subjects beyond classroom



The above photos were taken by Advanced Photography students on their class field trip to Chicago last Tuesday. The photos were contributed by Kelley Dickemeyer (12), Cari Landrigan (12) Lauren Farmer (12), Nick Kattman (11), and Jessica Howard (12).

By Hana Svetlovics
Writer

While the beginning of fourth quarter is usually used for AP exam review, college preparation and cumulative review for final exams, this year classes started the marking period off in a different direction. Select sciences classes traveled to Northrop High School, ecology students went to Chicago, fashions classes delivered blankets to children and several art classes went to art museums in the Windy City.

"I went to Northrop High School to listen to a lecture by Sam Rhine about cancer and a bit about cloning," Jocelyn Craig (11) said.

As an AP student, Craig manages her time well, going only on trips that will benefit her.

"I'd like every class to have a field trip if it's possible," Craig said. "It gives students a more hands on way to learn and to see how whatever it is they're doing is used in real life."

The lecture at Northrop was beneficial to students enrolled in Biology II because it touched on their knowledge of Biochemistry.

On two consecutive days following the biology trip, ecology classes and art classes went to Chicago, with some students going on both trips.

"[On the ecology trip] we went to the field museum and Shedd Aquarium," Veronica Mulhall (11) said.

With ecology being such a broad field, students saw many things involving their class work.

"There was an entire section in the first museum filled with all different kinds of animals," Katelyn Leininger (10) said. "A number of those animals were ones we had talked about in class, so it was fun to test my memory on [them]."

While ecology students were able to test their knowledge in museums, art students went to museums to get inspiration and see techniques talked about in class.

"We visited the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Art Institute of Chicago," Alyssa Bolinger (11) said. "We were given multiple hours at each destination and then some to explore the city and enjoy lunch."

While students enrolled in art classes found the museum particularly interesting, the wide selection in each museum makes art accessible for anyone.

"[After the Museum of Contemporary Art] we hopped back on the bus and went over to the Chicago Art Institute," Emily Sorenson (11) said. "It had everything. It had pieces that everybody can recognize. I enjoyed it."

With hours spent looking at art, many pieces left lasting impressions on the students.

"I liked this one piece at the Contemporary Art Museum," Sorenson said. "From far away it looked like just an abstract painting, but once you got up close, you realized it was actually pencil shavings."

With the variety of art in each museum, students were able to see their favorite artists while also learning about new artists.

"I can't say that I am inspired by just one artist," Sorenson said, "I take what I can from every piece of art work and use it to my advantage."

Photography students were able to broaden their horizons and take pictures of a new city.

"My favorite part of the trip was being able to walk around Millennium Park," Megan Davis (11) said. "We got to see 'the Bean' and other sculptures there and it was a great opportunity to get some good pictures."

While the overall trip was successful, the unpredictable March weather proved to be a problem.

"Unfortunately, the weather wasn't in our favor and it rained off and on all day," Mulhall said.

Although their trip lasted only one day, the fashion classes spent all of their third quarter preparing for the trip.

Students delivered their handmade quilts to underprivileged children at Headstart pre-school. These quilts took the entire first half of second semester to make.

Field trips can be a hassle for students who miss an entire day, but they still are part of the overall class experience.

"I feel field trips are very beneficial and are a great change from the classroom environment," Mulhall said. "I wish teachers and staff would try to incorporate them into the curriculum more."

COST Cont. from page 1A

country already believes is a recession, Singh's argument refocuses on school lunch, which averages students $1.50 per meal.

"My parents are at work all day, so they make enough money for me to eat at lunch," Singh said, "but because it's a public school, I understand that there are students that are not as lucky and may have to starve through lunch."

The amount of free and reduced-price lunches at Homestead has spiked yearly since 2005, when 3.3% of meals were partially or completely discounted. This school year, 6% of school lunches will not be fully paid for, the highest percentage recorded in 12 years. Such an increase, asserts Homestead Food Services Director Jane Sheley, is a clear indicator of the changing economic structure of Southwest Allen County.

"There have been a lot of new residential developments added to the area that can be considered low [income] housing," Sheley said.

Although both Southwest Allen County and Fort Wayne Community Schools participate in the National School Lunch Program, Homestead's $1.50 meal fee is comparatively low to neighboring districts. One hot lunch at Northwell High School costs students $1.75, while Huntington North charges their students $1.95. Homestead's $1.50 price tag is especially low when stacked up to Canterbury High School, where $4.25 single lunches are leaving parents up in arms.

"For what they get, it's not acceptable," Tammy Kunce, mother of a Canterbury freshman, said. "When there's 501 [lunch] choices at other schools, the Canterbury price is not worth it."

Students argue that the buck does not stop at lunch prices, though. Having been sent to residences in early March, textbook fee summaries are taking families by surprise, and in certain cases, outraging students themselves.

One such example is Austin Graber (10), whose bill included a rental fee of $8.75 for a textbook he claims he has never personally used. After a quick search, he found the root of the mystery cost-stacked neatly and unblemished in a corner of the classroom.

"I've never even touched those textbooks," Graber (10) said. "The teacher has read out of them maybe twice. It's ridiculous."

Regardless of students' complaints, Homestead treasurer Rosie Byall believes that textbook issues will only be legitimized if the school receives widespread criticism from parents. Until textbook disputes are proven to be more than just isolated incidents, Byall explains, students should consult their teachers.

"If students are charged for a textbook they don't use in the classroom," Byall said, "then students' question to the teacher should be 'why?'"

And so it seems others are asking that very same question.

In Computer Programming classes, aging software has caused students to speak out against what Phil O'Brien (10) calls "old" and "outdated" code compilers. In the parking lot, student drivers are paying $35.00 for a permit that costs only $5.00 to Snider pupils.

The rising costs of public education are not dissuading anyone, though; a yearly average of 42 students have been added to Homestead's hallways since 2000. Even their parents are adjusting to the financial obstacles as Allen County's median household income ballooned from $39,563 in 2000 to $45,630 in 2006. The only question left to ask, Singh argues, is whether the ends justify the means.

"Some aspects of Homestead can be expensive, but the educational standards are high," Singh said, "and it's worth that little extra to go here."

KUHN Cont. from page 1A

ing them tell other people's stories, and I haven't done that…All of those things that I can't do as an advisor, I'll be able to do when I'm out there," Kuhn said.

This financial incentive came only after an arduous application process including an application, letter of recommendation, financial draft, and essay attesting the value of his proposal. Out of a pool of many applicants, Kuhn became the 14th recipient of a Lilly grant from Homestead in the last 13 years.

"What Lilly looks for is a connection to your past, a connection to what you're doing presently and a connection to what you will do in your future and mine fell in all three of those areas," Kuhn said.

Recognized by the Journal Gazette for his recent distinction, Kuhn's fame will continue as he receives a key to the city in Marshall, Illinois.

This newsworthy trip, inspired by Charles Kuralt, CBS reporter famous for his 'On the Road' segments, officially ends in San Francisco, California, but Kuhn plans to continue touring the Southwest at his own expense.

The $8,000 that is provided for expenses is funded by the Lilly foundation and awarded to teachers throughout Indiana and some parts of Ohio, providing them the financial opportunity to explore their field and encouraging a community of active educators.

"Teachers become stagnant…when they aren't given the opportunity to grow" Kuhn said.

Kuhn hopes that the experience will both allow for personal growth and supplement what he brings to the classroom.

"A lot of the things that I'm doing on this trip hopefully will pan out to allow me to do a lot of other publications work, design work, photography, and maybe just continue to travel the rest of my life and do this," Kuhn said.

Kuhn notes the connection between his advancement in the field of communications and his aptitude as a teacher.

"I want to gain the knowledge that I need to help those of you who decide that media and communications is your career to be able to be more prepared for what you're going to face in college," Kuhn said.

Look forward to Kuhn's notes online this summer.

SALARIES Cont. from page 1A

years of experience. Beyond the top of the salary schedule, teachers get raises only when new contracts are negotiated and give us a cost of living increase," Ehrman said.

Besides judging teacher salaries, the Quality Report ranked states in various categories. For the category of standards, assessments and accountability, Indiana received its highest grade, A, which made Indiana the top state for that category in the nation. Indiana's second highest grade was a B for the category of finance. C minuses were received for the categories of teaching profession and K-12 achievement. Still, overall Indiana received a B- compared to the nation's C.

Though Indiana clearly has some strengths in the field of education as compared to other states, there is still room for improvement in many areas.

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Opinion

Are you registered to vote?

Indiana Primary: May 6, 2008

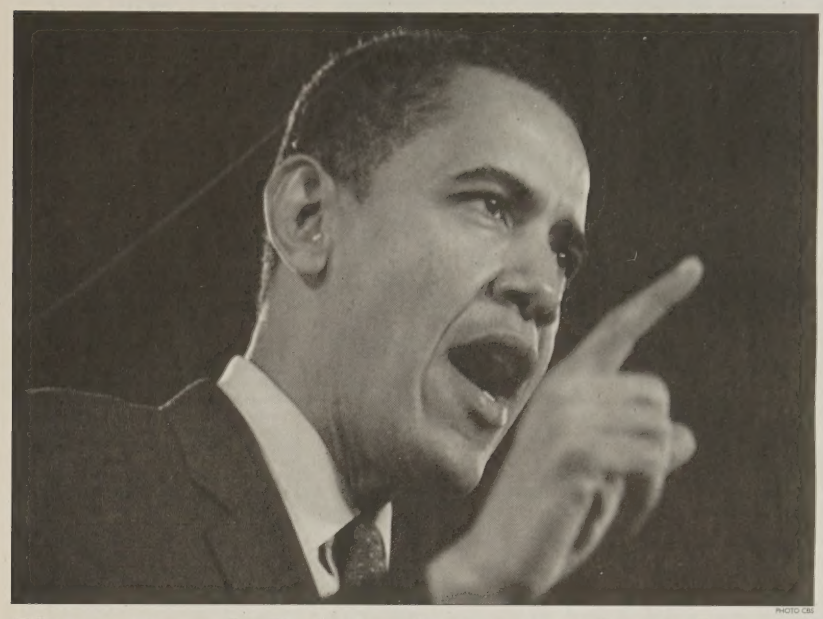

PHOTO CBS

Obama treads lightly after pastor's outbursts

Speech claims no responsibility for contraversial statements made

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

For Barack Obama, a discussion of race was inevitable at some point in his bid for the presidency. Before videos of his former pastor and mentor Jeremiah Wright giving anti-American sermons surfaced, however, Obama would have been able to choose the time of this discussion. Forced to confront the issue of race, Obama did so in one of the most eloquent speeches in United States history. Delivered to a small group in Philadelphia, Obama's speech outlined his views on race and his relationship with his former pastor. Though I don't support Obama's policies, his speech deserves recognition as a tremendous accomplishment.

Part of what makes Barack Obama's speech so special is the fact that he is not reliant on the words of others. In an age when politicians quote famous lines more often than create them, it was refreshing to hear Obama articulate his views in words that were his own - in a sense, Obama does have speech writers. Nothing in his speech was anything that has not been thought or felt before, but it was the fact that Obama was able to capture the feelings and emotions that many have when it comes to race that makes the speech memorable.

Obama began by explaining the foundations of racism as inherent in a slave-holding United States. He acknowledged the struggle and effort of those civil rights crusaders who had worked before him and then shared his own personal story.

> *"I am the son of a black man from Kenya and a white woman from Kansas."*
>
> **Barack Obama**
> Democratic Presidential Candidate

"I am the son of a black man from Kenya and a white woman from Kansas," Obama said. "I was raised with the help of a white grandfather who survived a Depression to serve in Patton's Army during World War II and a white grandmother who worked on a bomber assembly line at Fort Leavenworth while he was overseas. I've gone to some of the best schools in America and lived in one of the world's poorest nations. I am married to a black American who carries within her the blood of slaves and slaveowners - an inheritance we pass on to our two precious daughters. I have brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, uncles and cousins, of every race and every hue, scattered across three continents, and for as long as I live, I will never forget that in no other country on Earth is my story even possible.

"It is a story that has not made me the most conventional candidate. But it is a story that has seared into my genetic makeup the idea that this nation is more than the sum of its parts - that out of many, we are truly one."

This brief excerpt gives a sense of the eloquence with which Obama spoke. He went on to further describe his own identity racially and to describe his relationship with Reverend Wright. While Obama condemned his mentor's comments, he refused to disown him entirely saying, "he is a part of me."

While Obama described in his speech the need for universal healthcare and other social programs, opinions with which I disagree, the eloquence of his words and the clarity of his thought still make the speech compelling. According to MSNBC analyst Chris Matthews, "It is the greatest speech ever given on race in this country."

Abstinence programs stretch information

There are few things in life that I see as black and white. In most areas, what is right and what is wrong is muddled in with gray area. However, even as a regular Sunday attendee of Catholic mass, I am up in arms at the sexual education taught in our country.

Not only does our national government back abstinence-only education with millions of dollars while ignoring the majority of the population, which happens to be sexually active, but in doing so they have presented false facts and statistics, an act that I refer to as lying. Our national program to educate students on sexual education spreads lies.

By Ashley Hockney
News Editor

One of the main arguments for abstinence-only education comes from the need for parental approval. Who would have guessed that parents want to shelter their children from sex? Yes, I know that parents don't want to believe that according to the *Washington Post*, 95% of people, including their own precious children, will have sex before they walk the aisle, but the fact of the matter is that 61% of our nation's high school seniors will have sex before they toss their graduation hats, and they will do so without being given true sexual education.

Instead of spending money on a program that will teach safe sex to teenagers who will inevitably have sex anyway, $170 million are funding educational facilities to teach an abstinence-only program. Teens are not being taught how to protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases. They aren't being taught how or where to get proven effective contraceptives. Instead, they are taught, simply, that sex is bad unless you are married.

This lack of vital information for a sexually active student body should be enough to cause protest, but still, our religious zealots wouldn't have us corrupt their children. However, I doubt this demographic knows that abstinence-only education deliberately feeds lies to our generation, which happens to break one of those ten little commandments that they are trying so hard to protect.

If you think I'm exaggerating, 11 of the 13 most commonly taught abstinence-only programs, "contain unproved claims, subjective conclusions or outright falsehoods…," as printed by the *Washington Post*. Such claims include the thoughts that AIDS can be spread through sweat and tears (which it can't), condoms fail 31% of the time (the actual failure rate is 3% when used properly) and 10% of women who have an abortion become sterile (a direct contradiction to the 2001 edition of standard obstetrics in which sterility is not a known effect of a proper abortion).

> *"Students can still choose abstinence, and that choice will be made stronger on the basis of truth..."*
>
> **Ashley Hockney**
> News Editor

I remember hearing these statements, or what I've come to see as lies, in middle school. My main question now, is "Why?" Educating students does not include promoting sex, it simply means presenting true facts that garner educated decisions.

Students can still choose abstinence, and that choice will be made stronger on the basis of truth as opposed to scare tactics. I wonder, in slanting the facts to increase chastity, to increase purity, is an act of abstinence done off the basis of lies really pure?

Despite the ethics of educating students about sex, the bottom line in this situation is that we are spending federally funded tax dollars to spread inaccurate information. This corruption is against all ethical codes, whether you are a left wing liberal or a tightly strung conservative, and it must be stopped.

Although I may push for sexual education to protect those who do not choose abstinence, I demand that if abstinence is to be taught it must be backed with truth as well as our tax dollars.

Ed board: Unhealthy food choices part of 'real world'

Students say goodbye to yet another privilege. It has been referred to as soda, pop, coke and tonic, but no mater what you call it, at Homestead it is becoming harder to come by.

As Spartana Co-Editors-in-Chief pass each other in the hallway, one returning from track the other looking for his caffeine fix, a Coca-Cola employee is emptying the last of the soda machines.

Upon inquiry the two were told that all the soda machines are being overhauled to conform with health standards mandating 90% of selections offered must be water.

This is simply the most recent development in an ongoing effort by the "real" world to make students lives healthier. Students noticed at the start of last year the absence of Hostess cupcakes in the lunch lines. Later came the temporary closing of the back room until healthy alternatives could be offered. Now comes the restriction on after school eating habits.

Students who are overweight cannot trace their excess pounds solely to the school system. Bulging bellies and decreased fitness are caused by variety of biological and environmental factors, combined with personal habits, not soda machines.

Prior to the new regulations, students had limited access to the flavorful beverages arranged in two locations throughout the building. Drinks could not be purchased during school hours.

Shifting blame on the situation won't help. Neither will a school-wide recall and ban of 20 fl oz plastic bottles of carbonated water, citric acid and natural flavors. What's next? Regulation on saturated fat intake? Calorie dogs?

Throughout our 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 years of life, we have encountered the catch-all phrase, "school prepares you for the real world." But, as far as the editorial board can tell, the real world is indeed stocked with not only Coke machines, but also dozens of other carbonated, caffeinated, and souped up beverage varieties.

Do not forget the greasy, buttery, delicious movie theater popcorn, fairground's deep-fried twinkies and all you-can-eat-buffets that also grace the face of the "real world." We just wish the student body can survive long enough without caffeine to make it to that oh so glorious freedom.

One last question: does the machine in the teacher workroom abide by the regulations as well? Or are we, the students, the only people around here who cannot handle our weight by ourselves?

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Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the advisor in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

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Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to the Sparana at thespartana@gmail.com or dropped off in room 620.

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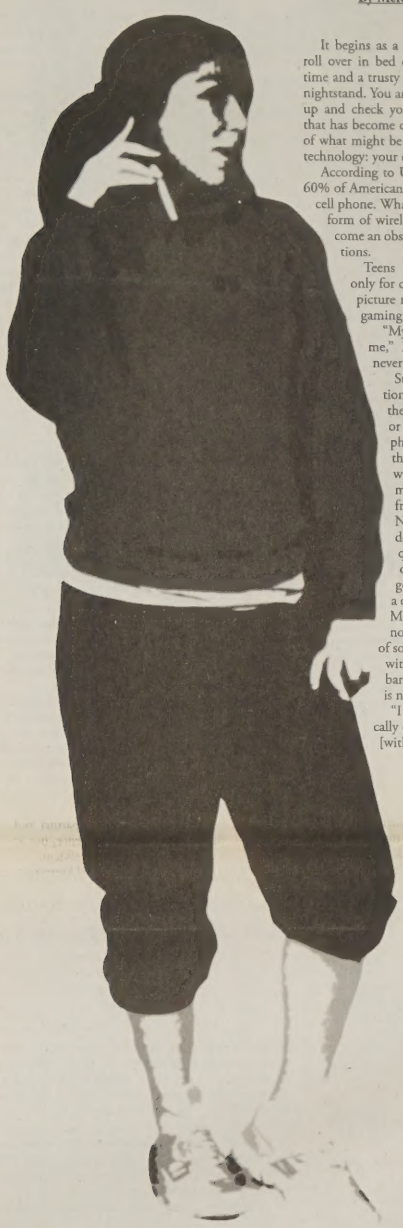
Life

Friday, March 28, 2008

Cell phone dependency grows

By Meredith McCracken
Writer



It begins as a simple inconvenience; you roll over in bed one morning to check the time and a trusty device is not resting on the nightstand. You are then forced to actually sit up and check your alarm clock, something that has become completely obsolete because of what might be your most reliable form of technology: your cell phone.

According to U.S. Cellular statistics, over 60% of American teens are in possession of a cell phone. What may seem as just a simple form of wireless communication has become an obsession with younger generations.

Teens use their cell phones not only for calls, but for text messaging, picture messaging, internet use and gaming.

"My cell phone is always on me," Maggie Kitch (9) said, "I never leave home without it."

Students should question what they would do if they were forced to go a day or more without their cell phone, and whether or not they would be able to survive without going into a severe meltdown or panic attack from lack of communication. Not being able to check the delay line in the morning quickly becomes only one of many hassles a teen faces going through a day without a cell phone. Suddenly, calling Mom or Dad after practice is not possible without the help of someone else and catching up with friends without the embarrassment of a house phone is no longer an option.

"I would feel naked and basically out of touch with the world [without a cell phone]," Luke Berghoff (11) said.

Berghoff is not the only teen whose day would be out of synch without his main form of communication. Over 60 million teens are cell phone carriers and they are sure to take them every place they go.

At Homestead, no student is allowed to use their phone at any time during the school day, but once the bell for seventh period rings, students are immediately dialing numbers and punching out texts to the people in their lives.

The phones offer many negative as well as positive aspects; for example, the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that 39% of cell phone users are not truthful about location or activity when using the phone. They also give teens an easy way to get around curfew and let parents call the teen directly instead of going through a landline. This, of course, allows the teen to say they are one place when in fact they are another.

"It's definitely nice to just talk to my mom where ever I am throughout the night," Adam Sirois (12) said. "I can just update her if I change my plans."

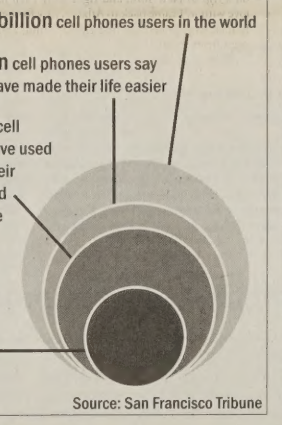
Without a phone, students feel out of touch and detached from their social lives in addition to their parents' inability to reach them at any location.

"My cell phone broke once and I had to rely on other people that had phones," Kitch said. "I never realized how dependent I was on it. I hated not being able to text people."

While cell phone use shapes the current teens in America, there is a clear sign that the next generation of text messengers and callers will not be able to handle the inconveniences of a day or two without a cell phone. Within three years, 54% of eight to twelve-year olds will have a cell phone according to the Yankee Group's market research.

For a modern teenager, a day without a cell phone would not be an easy day to handle. With the heavy dependence that students have on cell phones, these addictions may join the ranks of smoking and drugs in their difficulty to overcome.

AND THE SURVEY SAYS...


2 billion cell phones users in the world
1.66 billion cell phones users say cell phones have made their life easier
1.33 billion cell phones users have used the light from their cell phone to find something in the dark
760 million cell phones users say it is ok to use the cell phone in the bathroom

Source: San Francisco Tribune

DECA to Atlanta for national competition

By Arezoo Nazari
Writer

Nearly 80 Homestead Students went to Indianapolis this year for DECA's state competition. DECA, the Distributive Education Clubs of America, is a nationwide organization known to improve education and career opportunities for students. The chance to present a real-life situation in front of judges prepares students who are interested in careers in marketing, management and entrepreneurship to excel.

"Students who are interested in business and know that they want to pursue a career related to management need a background on the subject, which DECA provides," Brian McNeal said.

For the past 13 years, McNeal has been teaching in the marketing program in addition to coaching this team. Many have been successful with the experiences that they have had in DECA. Not only does it expand the horizon of studying marketing, entrepreneurship and finance, but it also offers the chance of meeting new people outside the city as well as locally.

"I met a lot of new people that I would never have expected to if I hadn't joined DECA this year," Megan Miller (12) said. "The experience was amazing and I would defiantly do it again if I could."

Through this program, networks are created, as students interact with many judges who can help them succeed in the future. Internships and scholarships are also provided to the students that have really gone above and beyond in their presentations.

DECA was promoted to potential members by business teachers as well as friends. The connections that trickled down to students encouraging them to participate in this program went a long way this year, as this year's numbers were the highest they have ever been. With so many members, six have qualified for state, four have achieved placing and two students received honorable mention.

This year, nationals will be located in Atlanta, Georgia, where two of Homestead's groups will be headed in April. The first group consists Lee Farnsworth (12), Rahul Gupta (12) and Nick Arnold (12). The second group is made up of Jamie Peterson (12), Emily Hay (12) and Janelle Halstead (12); all of which are the state winners from Homestead.

"This was a great experience," Peterson said. "I think the best part of it was when we were announced for first place in our event in retail marketing. As a group we had to write and present a 30 page paper about Green Marketing Campaigning. It consisted of a lot of teamwork, but was worth it in the end."

Many past participants have highly recommended DECA.

"Anyone that's interested in meeting new people and want a new experience out of high school should join," Chelsea Childers (11) said.

Building memorable moments with new people allowed the members to think of this not just as an ordinary competition, but an event that brought unforgettably good times. To top off the fun, the DECA organization threw a dance for all the competitors in Indianapolis during the weekend of state.

"DECA was fun," Zack Landin (10) said. "This was my first year, and I would do this again."

Several years from now, people will not only remember the funny memories they have had, but also the life learning lessons that they have carried with them. The knowledge of job interviews and the leadership that is takes allows the hard work to pay off.

Oprah's 'Big Give' aids Aboite New Trails

By Derek Luttrell
Writer

While devoting countless hours of time and effort to connect Southwest Allen County to its major counterparts for nearly the past six years, The Aboite New Trails program has finally received a break with a $10,000 donation from Oprah Winfrey and her new Oprah's Big Give television series.

The donation was originally given to Indiana's News Center, an advertising cohort of the Aboite New Trails and home of Oprah's Big Give, which airs every Sunday night. According to Lynn Reecer, President of the Board of Directors of the Aboite New Trails, Indiana's News Center sent a letter to the producers of Oprah's Big Give that promoted Fort Wayne's wishes to expand its trail project in order to bring families together and enhance Indiana's InShape program. The project was then granted the $10,000 as seed money to promote a larger fundraising event to increase the amount of the donation in a mission to give back to the community on a larger scale.

"The big gap between Covington Road from Eggeman to Scott Road will cost $625,000," Reecer said; which means the trail will cost about $300,000 per mile to connect the two ends.

News Channel 21 has been chosen by Winfrey's producers as one of 100 ABC affiliates to be rewarded with the money, "based on the merit of the person, family, or organization they nominated," Reecer said.

"We think [the donation] will help fund many more fundraising events," Reecer said. "[It will] probably [be] a walk/bike/run event in Aboite with similar events all over town on other trails."

Although used as a way to promote Fort Wayne and advertise Winfrey's new television series on ABC, the money also affects the daily lives of the common student.

"I hope they make more trails so people can ride their bikes around the Aboite area and do not have to worry about cars or gas," Eric Miller (10) said. "It's also a safe way to motivate people to get in shape and exercise."

The current trails have also been utilized as a way to connect loved ones that live in separate parts of the county, or would otherwise not be able to visit each other due to society's current issues, like the ever-so-popular gasoline calamity.

"I think [the trails are] really beneficial to the community as a whole," Samantha Sirois (10) said. "They connect separate neighborhoods together that kids otherwise wouldn't be able to get to visit their friends and family."

Some may wonder why the money was not used to aid one of the many families that are in dire need across Fort Wayne, rather than gambling it and hoping the money increases for a job that may not be completed for another couple of years, when in actuality, people need help now.

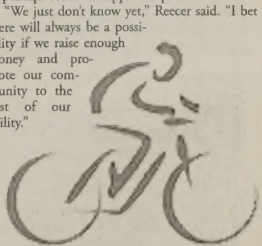
"The money should have gone to someone that really needs it now," Wenting Shen (10) said. "[Fort Wayne] has enough trails to hold us off for now, and there are just too many other things the money could be used for in the near or immediate future.

Those involved with the trails, on the other hand, offer a clarification that the trails will in turn benefit the entire community; a form of aid that would take place of a direct cash contribution for only one person.

"These trails affect everyone in some regard, whether you're single, married, have kids or are low-income," Tad Frank, director of marketing and promotion for Indiana's News Center said in a Journal Gazette interview. "We figured, we're being given this money, why not try to make it reach as many people as it can."

The area the original donation expands to is a key component of the Big Give competition. Indiana's News Center and Aboite New Trails have until Apr. 12 to use the $10,000 to its fullest capability in hopes of receiving much more money in donations, advertising and publicity. This raises the question of whether there is a possibility that Winfrey will film a segment on Fort Wayne, or perhaps come and appear in person.

"We just don't know yet," Reecer said. "I bet there will always be a possibility if we raise enough money and promote our community to the best of our ability."



BIKE ACROSS ABOITE

The goals:

- Raise funds for connecting the trail system
- Highlight the importance of bike safety
- Promote a healthy lifestyle
- Make aware recreational opportunities available

The 'Big Give' is giving the New Aboite Trails $10,000 to expand and fund-raise. It will be used as seed money to search for equal or greater funds and donations. The trails will also be searching for other potential community partners to raise the money and make sure that the money has a lasting effect on the Aboite area.

PHOTO ABOITE NEW TRAILS

Students lend helping hand

By Taylor Thompson
Writer

The community in general often views teenagers as troublemakers who often just make life harder for adults. While this may be true for some young adults, it certainly is not a good representation of the large number of students who do volunteer work. Whether this is done through reading to the elderly, preparing food for the needy, or raising money for a charitable cause, many students continually find ways to positively impact those around them who are less fortunate.

"I help the community through my work because I help local people and schools without them having to worry about money," Sameerah Alkhairy (10) said. "When I help the elderly, I give them someone to talk to, which makes them feel better. I am basically an extra set of hands for those who need them."

This civically virtuous mindset is a great asset to the community. Susan Summers, the head of Key Club, has her own opinions on why students volunteer.

"Many of our student volunteers are very compassionate, caring people who find that helping others gives a greater purpose to their lives," Summers said. "Many students enjoy going out into the community as volunteers because they get to meet interesting people and learn about organizations and occupations that they might otherwise not know about. Another strong motivator is that many selective universities and scholarship programs give greater consideration to students who have demonstrated a long-term commitment to serving the community."

Key Club plays a large role in encouraging students to do volunteer work. Members accomplish this objective through a number of opportunities to help others. Among these methods are promoting recycling, feeding families at Lutheran Hospital and assisting residents of nursing homes, but the list of service projects goes on and on. According to Mrs. Summers, everyone involved benefits from Key Club.

"Of course the primary benefit to the community is that HHS Key Club provides many hours of free service and labor to organizations who rely on the charity and good deeds of others in order to accomplish fantastic goals with very little money," Summers said. "But I also think that students who do volunteer work also help by showing those who don't have much contact with teens that there are a lot of really great young people who do a lot of really great things for their school and community.

While the volunteers are helping make the world a better place, they are also improving their own lives through their work.

"Students also benefit by volunteering," Summers said. "They learn many valuable life skills. They have to meet deadlines, be responsible for arriving on time, and present themselves in a professional manner....They learn how to share their time and their skills with those in need, and they get the satisfaction of doing a meaningful job for people who really need their help."

Another club that promotes volunteer work is the National Honors Society. Stephen Clough, head of the National Honors Society, is very adamant about the work his club does.

"National Honor Society students volunteer because that is the kinds of students they are, and so we have established a 5-hour minimum for service hours, all projects that benefit Homestead specifically, or are community related but not adopted by other school groups; helping with PBS fundraisers, for example," Clough said, sharing Summers' view that both the volunteers and the people utilizing their services benefit immensely from the students work.

"'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' would sum it up nicely–the blessing to the one being served is always fun to see, but the one no volunteer counts on or anticipates is the blessing of being the one who is giving of talent and time for the benefit of someone else," Clough said. "In this Me-First world, this ethic is becoming increasingly important."

Although these two clubs may have a slightly different set of objectives, they are basically two interpretations of the same overlying theme, which is making the world a better place.

Though society has grown increasingly materialistic and self-centered throughout history, it is hard to imagine a world where no one is willing to reach out and help others. School clubs and individual students who take on various projects make the community a better place for everyone, and all students are encourage to participate.

Veronica Mulhall climbs to new heights

Student prepares for South American venture to climb mountains

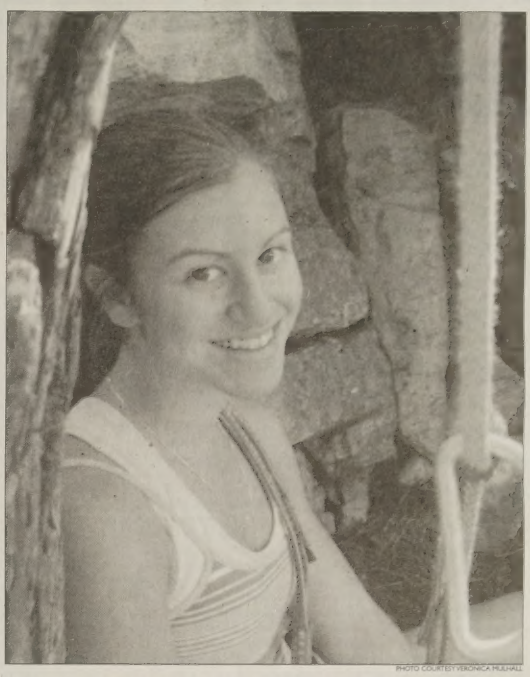


PHOTO COURTESY VERONICA MULHALL

With climbing experience in more places in the United States than she can recall, Veronica Mulhall (11) plans to travel beyond the national borders this Spring Break to satisfy her rock climbing desires on a cruise to Belize City, Belize and Cozumel, Mexico. Although Veronica admits that the climbing course will not be as rigorous as some she has tackled in the past, she is excited to see a new part of the world from a far as she takes part in the unique sport that has made a profound impact on her life.

Spartana: When did you first start climbing and what motivated you to try such an unusual sport?

Veronica: I started [climbing] in the summer of eighth grade. I actually ended up going out with my aunt and uncle when I was on a trip to New York, and right away I fell in love with it. I came back to Atlanta, [my former hometown], joined the first club I found, and went from there.

Spartana: So does all of your family climb?

Veronica: Actually, not at all. My parents are extremely afraid of heights and probably think I'm nuts. My mom went to college in the Gunks, which is a [climbing] place in upstate New York, and so she knows about it, but she would never do it. [My aunt and uncle] have been climbing for about 35 years now, mostly in the New England area, but they've been other places, too.

Spartana: Where are all the places that you have climbed?

Veronica: I've climbed the Shawn Gunks in New York, and Rumney which is also in New England. It's a very big sport climbing place. I've climbed at a lot of old quarries and little spots in New England and Massachusetts. [I've also climbed the] White Mountains in New Hampshire, up by Niagara Falls in Canada, T-Wall in Tennessee and the Red River Gorge, which is the closest place to Indiana, and that's in Kentucky.

I've climbed New River Gorge, which is in West Virginia, Mount Yonah in Atlanta, Tallulah Gorge in Atlanta, Horsepins 40 in Alabama and Boat Rock in Atlanta.

Out West, I've been all over Utah, and I've [spent a little time] in Oregon and Montana. In Wyoming, my favorite part is Jackson Hole. I love the Tetons. Tetons are a series of peaks, and the Grand Teton is the big one. It's in Jackson Hole, and although there is a lot more rock climbing at the base, it's a lot more of an expedition. You sleep overnight, and do some hiking.

Spartana: Out of all your trips, which one has been the most influential on your climbing career?

Veronica: [My trip to] Mount Yonah in North Georgia [really inspired me to start climbing]. I had been climbing once or twice before then and I'm a pretty big thrill-seeker, so I loved it, but I wasn't fully committed to it yet. A good friend of mine, Chuck Crawford, and I, [along with] two of my best friends, Austen and Andrew, ended up making a school climbing team.

There were about five of us, and we went [to Mount Yonah]. It was one of my first multilead climbs, which means you're all climbing connected to each other, but far away. I remember by the second pitch, which a pitch is a [specific] length in the rope, I was standing on a tiny ledge, and I looked down, and I just remembered thinking, 'Oh, dear God! What if I fall?' But I think the greatest surprise was that while I was standing there, I was telling myself, 'I can't be afraid. I'm with a bunch of boys and none of them are afraid.'

Then suddenly I heard a little clicking, and I saw little rocks falling down right next me, and the biggest guy in the group, my friend Austen, who's now 21, was shaking and about to wet his pants. From then on, I kept going higher and higher, and I realized that although climbing has a lot of technical stuff and it's very serious, it's one of the most fun things I've ever done in my entire life.

PHOTOS COURTESY VERONICA MULHALL

Spartana: Tell us about your trip this Spring Break.

Veronica: I'm going on a family cruise, and we'll be porting in Belize and Cozumel. I'll be in Florida for a day, and hopefully and get in some nice sun and enjoy the weather. Then, I'll be on ship for a day. I'll be ported in Belize for two days. I'll be on the ship for that night, and then, I'll wake up in Cozumel that morning. Normally, you can do an excursion when you get off the boat, but it's my seventeenth birthday, so as a gift from my parents, when we port at both places, I'll be going on short climbing trips instead.

Spartana: Will you be going alone?

Veronica: My dad might come to watch, but he won't be doing any climbing. Of course, you never climb alone. Well, I mean, you can, but it's not very smart, so I'll be going with local guides who really know the rock and can ensure my safety.

Spartana: What convinced you to go to Belize over Spring Break as opposed to anywhere else?

Veronica: At first, [my family and I were] looking for just a normal Spring Break trip, maybe to Cabo. We definitely wanted to get out of the United States, and me, being a climber, was like, 'Well, I really don't want to go to Cancun.' I like the true beauty of nature, and I didn't want the hustle and bustle [of a big city], so I looked into some places and started slipping little pamphlets under my mom's door about Belize. I was like, 'Look at it! It's gorgeous. No one's there. Let's go!' So she quickly found at least eight or nine cruises going there, and she was like, 'Pick one.' It's a great opportunity, and I'm really glad because I've never been there so it's something new.

Spartana: Why have you chosen to take part in rock climbing out of all the other more convenient sports available?

Veronica: I've done a lot of sports. I started when I was little. I did ballet and gymnastics, and I followed through with gymnastics for 12 years. Then I had an injury, and after that I kind of was at a loss for what I should do. At that moment, [climbing] just kind of came into my life. It's probably the only thing that really still gives me that passion and drive to do something [adventurous]. I [also] play Lacrosse, which I dearly love, so they both battle each other for which one's my favorite.

Spartana: What has rock climbing taught you about life?

Veronica: Honestly, I almost base my life off rock climbing. I mean, you have to have so much trust in your [climbing] partner and within yourself. [You need] confidence, but at the same time, you can't be over-confident. You really have to have that balance and know your limits and know how far to push yourself.

Spartana: Not only is rock climbing something you enjoy to do, but also it is your job. Tell us about your work and the climbing opportunities available.

Veronica: Right now, I'm working at the YMCA, [setting the climbing walls]. I usually work three to four days a week, and right now I'm in the middle of girl's lacrosse season, so I'm only working nights, but I love the Y. I love working with kids.

The great thing is that lately, we're opening up teenage and adult classes, so they [deal with] a lot of the fundamentals of climbing and teaching everyone what to do. Come summer and come fall, we're going to go on some outdoors trips down to Red River Gorge and up to Michigan.

I also work at Earth Adventures, and I set bouldering routes in the basement. Routes are basically patterns of how you climb for bouldering, and for climbing it's a direct way to the top, so there's many ways of doing that. Any given route could have anywhere from three to 3,000 routes on it. I also help upstairs with backpacking and other things like that. It's great. I have a lot of fun.

For all those people out there that haven't tried [rock climbing] and maybe want to stay in their shell a little bit, Earth Adventures...is considering making an actual climbing gym in a year or two, so definitely look out for it because it's a great opportunity, a great sport and something different that a lot of people can be good at.

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issue 10 volume 38
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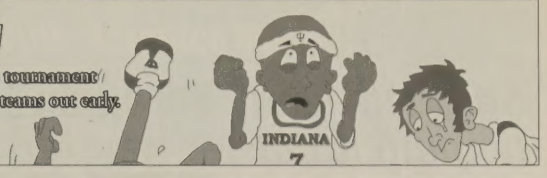
Sports

Bracketology

NCAA March Madness tournament continues with Indiana teams out early.
See story on page 7A.



Friday, March 28, 2008

Boys' track starts season strong

Runners undefeated in outdoor meets, favorites to win Northeast Hoosier Conference title

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

As the seasons change from winter to spring, the sports seasons change along with them. From the bitter cold of winter to the luke warm weather of spring, sports seasons switch back to the outdoors. The boys' track team began their season and defense of their conference title during the winter with grueling practices running miles in the wind and cold along Homestead, Eggeman and Aboite Center Roads. These winter runs helped prepare the boys for the spring season to come.

Along with running in the cold, Coach Dick Shenfeld also has had the team doing new workouts, which begin when the running ends.

"Coach has us doing new workouts on our abs and legs," Kyle Beutler (11) said. "He also has us conditioning a lot more this year."

The team had a very successful run in 2007, going undefeated and not losing a meet until their sectional match up against Wayne, at which many of the members believe they should have won. The team looks poised to make another conference title run and is hoping to get over that hump and win sectionals.

> *"Our team goals are definitely to go undefeated, win conference and win sectionals. With the personnel we have its very possible."*
>
> **Colin Lyman (11)**
> Distance Runner

"Our team goals are definitely to go undefeated, win conference and win sectionals," Colin Lyman (11) said. "With the personnel we have its very possible."

The team is getting extra motivation to reach their goals because Shenfeld announced to the team that this will be is final year as the head coach. Shenfeld was inducted into the High School Track Hall of Fame this past winter.

"We're basically trying to win one for the gipper," Lyman said, referring to Shenfeld by his affectionate nickname.

The team is led by an experienced senior class, inlcuding Ross Heckber (12), Mike Townsend (12), Doug Snyder (12), Andy Alvarez (12), Brian Graham (12), Shane Ruckel (12), Joey Debolt, Nick Edwards (12) and others. This veteran class has had an array of conference, sectional, and even state accolades in past years and is poised to use such experience in leading the team. Heckber, in particular, brings his experience of going to state from last year in the 300 hurdles and will provide leadership to push others into the championship part of the season.

Like every season, the meets begin indoors. The main difference between the outdoor and indoor meets is the roof overhead. The team breezed through the indoor competition, going undefeated and sending multiple competitors to state this past weekend. The 3200 and 1600 meter relays advanced to indoor state and were joined by Ruckel and Philip O'Brien (10) in the pole vault, Sluyter and Kyle Frebel in the high jump, and Debolt in the long jump.

"The indoor season really helps the team prepare for outdoors and helps us improve individually and as a team," Beutler said.

The team has its strong points in virtually every running event, which is not any shock to the team or the competition. Boys' track followers have had high expectations going into the season ever since the end of last year's successful post-season run.

Their first outdoor meet was against the Elmhurst Trojans, who proved to be no match for the Spartans, as the team dominated the meet.

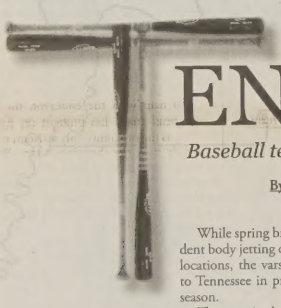
The boys returned to beat opponents Huntington North and Southside on Wednesday, Mar. 26, after a one day weather delay. Highlights of the meet included Kyle Beutler (11) winning the 800 meter run, Kodi Mullins (9) winning the 3200 meter run, and Dan Haught (11) winning the 100 meter dash.

As the team starts off the outdoor season after a strong indoor season, they look for similar results. The boys are also looking to send more of their teammates to win some medals at the state competition.

With senior leadership and many returning runners, the boys' track team is a favorite to win the Northeast Hoosier Conference again this year. The experience of the team may be able to lift them further into the state tournament.

PHOTO BY IAN HAMILTON

Joey DeBolt (12) long jumps at the tri-meet against Southside and Huntington North on Wednesday, Mar. 26. The boys decisively won the meet.



ENNESSEE-BOUND

Baseball team heads to Volunteer State over break to scrimmage, prepare for new season

By Kara Busse
Writer

While spring break will find most of the student body jetting off to Florida and other warm locations, the varsity baseball team is heading to Tennessee in preparation for the upcoming season.

The team is planning on going to the Volunteer State to play teams from around that area before the season begins in Indiana.

Within a day's driving distance and home to more temperate weather, Tennessee represents a practical location for the boys' spring break practices.

"The games over spring break are just exhibition, but they should still be fun," Zach Stine (11) said.

"We are all going to play in the games and practice while we are in Tennessee to get ready for the season," Chris Jorgensen (12) said.

As soon as the boys get back from Tennessee, they play a game against Marion Apr. 5, the last Saturday of spring break.

The loss of last year's seniors, as well as coach, posed as a problem for the varsity team, but with leaders such as Ryan Wright (12) and Bob Glover (12), the boys should do fine in their premiere games of the year.

The absence of former head coach Keith Potter will pose an obstacle to the team. After leading the team to semi-state the previous season, Potter elected to end his tenure with the program.

After returning from break, the team will face two days of home games versus Manchester and Concordia. Although both games fall outside of conference play, their importance will not be overlooked by the senior leadership of the team.

"I think the juniors fill in the spots of the seniors from last year really well," Stine said.

"We are still a good team," Jorgensen said. "With Travis as our number one pitcher and Doug most likely being the team's catcher, different players are stepping into those roles nicely."

Logan Bultemeier (12), Ryan Trieglaff (12) and Jorgensen are ready to take more responsibility and play a little more as seniors compared to their last season. This situation will hopefully make those tough games a little easier.

"Carroll and Norwell will be good in the conference and Northrop will be good in the city," said Jorgensen.

While the team practices their hitting and fielding and prepares for the upcoming season, they have one thing to prove to the spectators, no matter how many players graduated and coaches have left, they are still a team able to live up to their expectations and standards set buy last year's semi-state qualifying team.

"The new additions [to the team] such as [myself], are willing to put it all out there for the team," Stine said. "We are going to have to play our best and give 100% all of the time."

"We are still a strong and intelligent team and we are going toprove that to everyone that comes to watch us play," Jorgensen said.

As covered is our last issue, Southwest Allen County middle school Athletic Director Steve Sotir has taken over the program. The team hopes the combination of solid senior leadership, dedicated underclassmen and fresh new coaching will lead the Spartans to success.

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Game Time

Bracketology returns for NCAA basketball tournament, Indiana teams bow out in early rounds

By Chris Ray
Sports Editor

Each year's sports calendar always looks the same: January brings the BCS Football Championship, February brings the Super Bowl and March brings the Madness. Not one other sport can claim to take over a nation as much as college basketball does each year. With 65 teams fighting for one national championship, madness may be an understatement.

Millions of people across the nation fill out multiple brackets to win money or bragging rights. Basketball fans see March as the greatest time of the year; after all, this is the one time of year that one can continuously watch basketball from 12:00pm to 10:00pm without losing interest; it is a sports heaven for the diehard fans.

"It's basically a holiday," Alex Futter (11) said. "Basketball is on for four straight days, and even the 'cool' teachers turn on the games every once in a while. Who doesn't want to come home and watch basketball until [going to] bed?"

The art of filling out brackets has become just a facet of the 'holiday' that March Madness has become. With people analyzing, re-analyzing and over analyzing all the match-ups in order to try to pick the perfect bracket, March Madness has become crazier than ever. People have become so caught up in brackets that even a science has been created: bracketology.

"Most of the time, when filling out a bracket, my decision is based on whether I like the team, whether I have a gut feeling about the team, and if that doesn't work, I resort to bracketology," Wes Ring (10) said.

The 65 teams in the tournament are seeded depending on how well they performed in the regular season and conference tournaments. Teams can earn a placement from 1-16, with the 1-seeds being the favorites to win the tournament. However, these teams do not always end up winning, as they can be knocked off by the underdogs. These underdogs, whether winning convincingly as 13-seeded Siena did against 4-seeded Vanderbilt, or in dramatic fashion as 12-seeded Western Kentucky did against 5-seeded Drake, become the favorite storylines for many fans to follow.

Often, after the favorites lose early on, people jump on the bandwagons of the underdog teams. This year, many are jumping on the Davidson bandwagon after they defeated Gonzaga and Georgetown to advance to the Sweet Sixteen behind their star guard Stephen Curry and his 35 points per game.

"This year, I have to love the Davidson story,"" Futter said. "Stephen Curry is fun to watch, and it's great to have a small school like this defeat powerhouses like Gonzaga and Georgetown."

"Davidson is a great story," Ring said. "Although I would have liked to keep my bracket as close to perfect as possible, it's always fun to see a team like this advance."

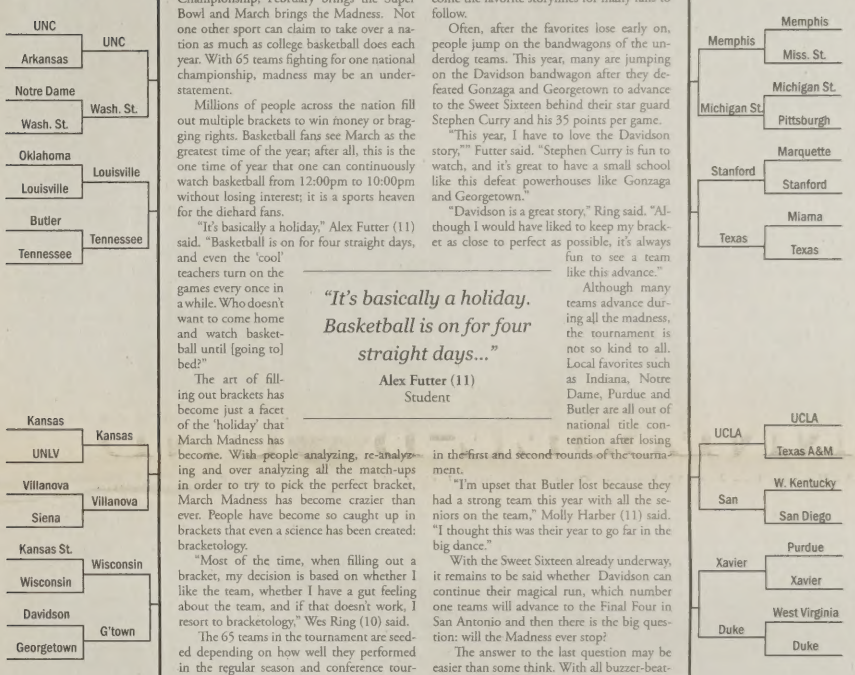
> *"It's basically a holiday. Basketball is on for four straight days..."*
> **Alex Futter (11)**
> Student

Although many teams advance during all the madness, the tournament is not so kind to all. Local favorites such as Indiana, Notre Dame, Purdue and Butler are all out of national title contention after losing in the first and second rounds of the tournament.

"I'm upset that Butler lost because they had a strong team this year with all the seniors on the team," Molly Harber (11) said. "I thought this was their year to go far in the big dance."

With the Sweet Sixteen already underway, it remains to be said whether Davidson can continue their magical run, which number one teams will advance to the Final Four in San Antonio and then there is the big question: will the Madness ever stop?

The answer to the last question may be easier than some think. With all buzzer-beaters, with all the underdogs, with all the favorites, with all the great players, with all the spirit, the Madness of March will never cease to exist year in and year out.



Transfer twins add to varsity softball's depth

Team welcomes Leeper duo, looks past inclement weather

By Kalyn Jorgensen
Writer

Every season brings changes. The previous years' seniors leave, goals for the team differ and new players are added. For the Lady Spartans softball players, the team has been altered significantly from last year. With four graduates not returning, the team was grateful when two new players transferred to Homestead.

CLOSE UP

Alyssa Leeper
-Wears: #15
-Does: pitching

Erica Leeper
-Wears: #17
-Does: catching

Former Elmhurst athletes, Alyssa Leeper (11) and Erica Leeper (11), are twins who have been playing softball for majority of their lives, and they have always been on the same team throughout their athletic careers. Alyssa's main position is pitcher while Erica catches. Although both Elmhurst and Homestead have softball programs, the Leeper girls believe that the Spartan's program completely contrasts with their former experience.

"Just about everything is different [at Homestead]," Alyssa said. "The coaching styles and experience of players is really different. At Elmhurst they don't really encourage us to play in the summer and here they do. Also, pretty much everyone at Homestead has experience. At Elmhurst there were like three or four girls who had previous experience."

Transferring schools was not a very rigorous task for the twins. They have played with numerous members of the Spartan team through summer leagues, and knowing some of the girls and having a sister on the team helped ease the transition.

"I really enjoy having my sister on the team," Alyssa said. "I always have someone to throw with and challenge me to do better. The one thing I mostly enjoy is having someone to talk to after a game. We get to talk about what we need to improve on and really good things that happened in the game. I couldn't imagine being on a team without Erica."

Both girls are really looking forward to begin playing games. They would like to improve the way they play and get varsity letters. Erica would like to win the sectional title and Alyssa wants to hit a homerun, but neither can wait to have fun and better themselves.

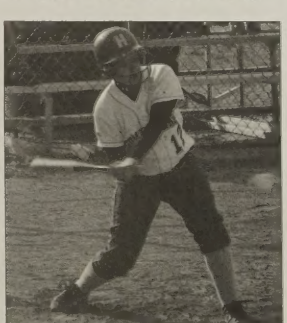
"The most important thing I am looking forward to this season is actually winning a game," Erica said. "At Elmhurst we won maybe six games. I can't wait to have a really good record."

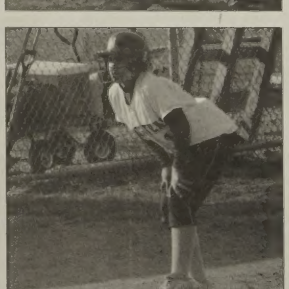
The twin's teammates share their eager mentality to start the season with the new additions.

"I have been playing summer ball with [the Leepers] for a while now so it's great to finally have them on our high school team," Stacey Roelke (12) said, "They are talented players and will be a good asset to our team because they will add depth."

The Lady Spartans were scheduled to play the Leeper's old school, Elmhurst, in a scrimmage Mar. 18th. However, due to foul weather the teams were not given the opportunity to play. The weather not only hindered that game, but is becoming a problem with practices. The team is not able to practice on the softball field because it is still too wet, and while they have been able to have a few practices on the football field, they are generally inside.

"Having rainy and cold weather can be kind of good because we get to make up every game that is cancelled," Jacqui Matheis (11) said. "This gives us extra time to practice and we get to play when it's warmer. Because of this, we can bring our best to every game instead of focusing on how cold it is."





PHOTOS BY IAN HAMILTON

Top: Erica bats. Below: Alyssa looks to run home.

Girls' track adjusts to new coach

By Erin Quinn
Co-Editor-In-Chief

While inexperience has been a factor for many Spartan athletic teams throughout the year, none have been faced with such enduring, program-wide devastation from the previous season as the girls' track team. With an entirely new coaching staff and a thinned-out roster, the defending conference and sectional champion team began their 2008 season on a dismal note.

A full-scale leadership overhaul, in addition to multiple non-returning underclassmen and graduation, has led to questions regarding this team's ability to compare to past years' decorated success. Homestead has historically been considered a girls track 'powerhouse' across the state, but is faced with potentially becoming a nonthreatening entity. After numerous conference, sectional, and state championship contenders, the program is in jeopardy of falling off of the podium.

Since last season, the team has lost all of its coaches, including co-head coaches Andrea Baker and Sara Wyss, who were honored as last year's Northeast Hoosier Conference Coaches of the Year. The three veteran coaches (distance specialist Wyss, sprint coach Baker and throwing coach Steve Bushong) all decided not to return for personal reasons.

The job that was previously occupied by as many as six positional experts has been undertaken by first year business teacher Amy Barnes. Numerous athletes from last year have displayed reluctance to rejoin the team after such a big change.

"[It seems like] half of our team didn't return," Carolyn Mutton (10) said. "They didn't have the same trust and they didn't want to take the risk of having a new coach."

In addition to hard-earned experience, the team lacks the fundamental point scorers they have grown to rely upon during past seasons.

One of their more persistent struggles has been to fill positions in the field events. After losing state-qualifiers in the discus, long jump and pole vault events, Barnes is faced with the challenge of grooming a new generation of jumpers, throwers and vaulters.

To help with the endeavor, the first year head coach has brought on Kenny Glaze as the program's only assistant coach to help with the throwing events. While Glaze lacks shot put and discus experience, the team is relying on his help in all areas of the sport.

The distance sector is the least scathed, as it returns all but two of their core scoring members from last season. Seasoned two-milers Ali Kattman (11) and Laura Donnell (10), milers Meghan Terrell (11) and Rachel Taylor (12), and half-milers Mutton and Chloe Smith (10) will be joined by cross-country standouts Katrina Schreiber (9) and Karen Trexler (9), both dual short and middle distance threats.

While the initial forecast looked gloomy without many of the team's expected returnees from last season, the Spartans are receiving a mid-season boost with the trickling additions of experienced competitors. The sprint events are recovering from their initial short-comings with the help of Terrayasha Gordon (10), a four event participant throughout the 2007 season, and Whitney Washington (11), a two-year decorated relay and short distance specialist, who rejoined the squad in their latest meet.

"It's hard starting with a new coach because we don't have the same basis of trust we have had. We knew exactly what to expect in previous seasons, but now it seems like we have to take a giant step backwards and learn about our coaches, in addition to new teammates, before we can get anywhere," Mutton said.

The team's first taste of competition came at the Mar. 16 indoor meet at Anderson University. Barnes choose not to enter her young squad in the late weekday night meet at Purdue University the following week. They took the track for the next time against Huntington North on Mar. 18th to mark the start of their outdoor season.

Although the varsity team emerged with a loss, they were comforted by several promising performances. The team put up more of a fight against Huntington North the second time, although Northrop was also at the meet and beat both teams.

After just three meets, certain young athletes have emerged as potential contributors. Barnes and her narrow set of experienced upperclassmen turn to fresh faces to fill the gaps from last season, including Marissa Magana (9), Allie Gehring (9), Katie Stark (9) and Natalie Hicks (9), who have shown promise in the short, middle, and hurdling events.

The main problem facing the splintered, inexperienced team is becoming just that: a team.

"We need more team unity. We need to trust each other more than we do," Mutton commented.

The girls will need to adjust to a different atmosphere and new coaches in the coming weeks in order to hit the ground running and uphold Homestead's successful track tradition.

WHAT TO DO WHEN FORT WAYNE IS YOUR ONLY SPRING BREAK DESTINATION

by Patrick Svitek

Alpaca convention, Edible Book Festival amongst citywide oddities

This Spring Break, Homestead students will spend 233 hours and 15 minutes from Mar. 29 to Apr. 7 away from the drudgery of high school in its entirety. Students will travel more than 1086 miles to the Sunshine State and beyond to escape the stress of an impending fourth quarter – the last fourth quarter of high school for 25% of Homestead's population. Another group of students will not be as fortunate, though. Stuck with the single luxury of sleeping in, their spring breaks will not be filled with endless bodies of water and equally endless sunburns. So, for the rest of Homestead: here's a guide on how readers can spend their 233 hours of housebound Spring Break without wandering past the Summit City limits.

PHOTO WWW.VISITFORTWAYNE.COM

PHOTO WWW.NARFLIX.WORDPRESS.COM

Far Left: Though Fort Wayne is only Indiana's second largest city, home to just around 200,000 people, it hosts many eccentric events for those seeking some spring break entertainment. **Left:** For those that have been recently alpaca deprived or are just in need of a fuzzy new sweater, the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum will be hosting the Indiana Alpaca Invitational on April 4.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
23	24	25	26	27	28	

MARCH

← **APPLY FOR A JOB THAT PAYS $8.00 PER HOUR:** It may be a little too early for students to start contemplating summer jobs, but the Allen County Public Library is one step ahead of them. This past month, library branches posted available summer positions for teenagers, ranging from general assistants to Team Read readers. All jobs pay $7.98 per hour and applications, which can be obtained at respective library branches, are due Tuesday, Apr. 4. The only skill requirements, as the Allen County Public Library's website details, are adequate literacy skills and "familiarity with computers." PHOTO BY TOM PLATT

GET THRIFTY...OR SEE ALPACAS AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME: The Memorial Coliseum will be hosting two annual events over Homestead's Spring Break, the Indiana Flea Market from Mar. 28 through Mar. 30, and the Indiana Alpaca Invitational from Apr. 4 through Apr. 6. The flea market, which attracted everyone from stamp collectors to toy car traders in 2007, will span three days as it takes the floor in the Coliseum's Expo Center. As soon as the market clears out, room will be made for regional alpaca breeders on the later end of the week. The Expo Center will transform into 108,000 square feet of local enthusiasm for the llama-like creatures. Admission to the Indiana Alpaca Invitational is free and the bill of events includes a "Show Ring Etiquette" workshop and lecture from Department of Animal Sciences member Brett Kaysen. →

30	31	1	2	3	4	

EAT A BOOK, SAVE A READER: In 1999, Judith Hoffberg suggested an idea to a group of book illustrators over a Thanksgiving dinner. Her idea, throughout the years, would blossom into an international sensation of astronomic proportions. This year, Fort Wayne's Ivy Tech Community College will continue Hoffberg's vision on Tuesday, Apr. 1 with their own Edible Book Festival. The festival will feature various scenes and elements of popular literature – recreated through intricate combinations of cake and frosting. The due date for registration has passed, but the event, which will be held in the Anthony Commons of Ivy Tech's Coliseum Campus, is open to the public for viewing. Don't want to stick around for the pre-meal banter? Book-tasting starts at 1 p.m. →

PHOTO WWW.ELEFAND.WORDPRESS.COM

APRIL

←**PONG IT UP AT THE THREE RIVERS TABLE TENNIS CENTER:** The Three Rivers Table Tennis Center, located in the gymnasium of the Messiah Lutheran Church on Stellhorn Road, has been giving area ping pong players an outlet for their sport for more than 10 years. On the first Tuesday of every month, the club holds a tournament where players can compete, free of charge, for nothing but the glory of being the last man standing. Trophies are awarded, but the TTC places the real emphasis on healthy competition and overall fun. The Apr. 1 tournament begins at 7:30 p.m.

6	7					

END OF SPRING BREAK

↑ **EXPERIENCE THE ROLLING STONES ON THE SILVER SCREEN:** On Friday, Apr. 4, local cinemas will fill their marquees with Shine a Light, a concert film featuring performances from the Rolling Stones' 2006 stint in New York City's renowned Beacon Theatre. Directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Martin Scorcese, who has sampled the Stones' music in The Departed and Goodfellas, the movie will also offer exclusive footage of the band's career on and off the stage. Originally rated R, Shine a Light was edited and subsequently re-rated as PG-13 to attract the under-17 crowd – and possibly hold its ground against weekend box office competitor Leatherheads. For those yearning for a near concert-like experience, Shine a Light will be released at select IMAX theatres on the same date.

WHY WE WILL LOVE AND MISS FORT WAYNE

Students reminisce about what they will miss about the Summit City

BROCK ROHLFING (11)

"Fort Fun pretty much says it all. Fort Wayne just offers a schmorgasbord of community events and activities. It's going to be hard to go on a cruise and leave it all behind."

KATHRYN GRAHAM (10)

"The thing that I will miss most about Fort Wayne will be the time. When I go to Arizona I will lose three hours and be behind on my sleep."

BRENT ROBINSON (11)

"I am going to miss my family since they are staying home when I go to Florida. I think I might miss my privacy too since I'm traveling with a large group of people."

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the Spartana

Friday, April 18, 2008

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

Sen. Hillary Clinton answers the questions of supporters during a roundtable discussion inside Sara's Family Restaurant.

Hangin' *with* Hoosiers

Presidential nominees Clinton, Obama visit Fort Wayne before primary to discuss issues

By Ashley Heath
Writer

Despite some unusually cold temperatures this spring, things are just starting to heat up in Fort Wayne as democratic candidates visit the area and compete for votes.

Both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton spoke at local venues over Spring Break, vying for the Democratic nomination in the general election. The recent appeal to Indiana voters is attributed to the close race between Obama and Clinton.

PHOTO BY ASHLEY HEATH

Sen. Barack Obama speaks to supporters inside the Wayne High School gymnasium.

"Indiana has not carried any political weight in the country for over 40 years, and this primary attention that we are receiving is pretty much a once-in-a-lifetime experience," Andrew Reiman (12) said.

Hillary Clinton was just a few miles from Homestead High School on Mar. 28, visiting Sara's Family Restaurant at the Village at Coventry. After addressing the crowd, she sat down in the restaurant, fielding questions from people at her table and discussing economic issues.

Nabi Faghihi, the owner of Sara's Family Restaurant and an immigrant from Iran, was thoroughly enthused to host such a patriotic event.

"The news media is going to be airing her speech at 5:45 p.m. nationwide,"" Faghihi said. "That's pretty exciting, Fort Wayne, Indiana, Sara's Restaurant, Southwest Fort Wayne, that's…an honor."

Keith Potter, government teacher, was seated inside the restaurant and witnessed the event.

"[Clinton] was basically stating her economic philosophy and what she felt the government's role was in improving the economy," Potter said.

Clinton's goal for the evening was to achieve a mutual understanding of the people's concerns and her plans to solve them.

"You can't have a conversation with every Hoosier but you can have a conversation with some who represent a lot of the concerns that are on the line," Clinton said.

Clinton addressed the issues of outsourcing jobs, the dilapidation of the steel industry, our dependency on foreign oil, the increasing number of home foreclosures and many more foreign and domestic

SEE ELECTION on page 2A

BRIEFS

SADD EAT 'N' DRIVE

The annual Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Eat and Drive will be held at in the front corner of the Homestead parking lot on Apr. 24. Chicken will go on sale at 2:30 p.m., but the actual event begins at 4:00 p.m. and lasts until 7:00 p.m. The event is in need of bands and will pay $100 to two bands to perform a 45 minute set. Anyone who is interested should see Karen Hirschy in room 516 and bring a demo CD or set up an audition time.

NHS COFFEE HOUSE

The National Honor Society will be holding a Spring Coffee House on Friday, Apr. 25 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Homestead Commons. There is no fee to enter, but there will be coffee and refreshments available for purchase. There will be music groups performing and other entertainment from Homestead and the local area. This will all be held in order to provide students with a fun event while at the same time raising funds for the National Honor Society.

EARTHFEST

This year's Earthfest will be held on Thursday, May 1. T-shirts are the ticket into the event, and will be sold during all lunches in the cafeteria for $10. The event lasts from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and will be located between the freshman academy tunnels in the courtyard, if weather permits. Student government is looking for bands to play--interested parties should contact Naomi Killham (12) or Quinn Brenneke (10) immediately.

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Volunteer opportunity: Arbor Day tree planting in Indian Trails Park

By Luke Chase
Co-Editor-in-Chief

The United States had the seventh largest annual loss of primary forests in the world from 2000-2005, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Over those five years, an average of 831 square miles, or 531,771 acres, of "old-growth-forests" were lost.

Because of his belief in the importance of tree growth and an AP government semester project, Michael Breuning (11) has set a plan in motion to plant 100 trees in the Indian Trails Park with the assistance of Barbara Krisher, Township Trustee, on Apr. 25, Arbor Day.

NEED HOURS?

Students in NHS or a government class who help to plant trees can receive credit for volunteer hours.

Semester projects in Keith Potter's AP Government class can be either a 10,000-word essay or 20 hours of community service. Breuning opted to perform community service at the US Senator Richard G. Lugar Northeast Indiana Community Service Center (NICSC) and originally fulfilled his 20 required hours by planning a blood drive, setting window displays and handing out fliers. Breuning was able to use his contacts at the NICSC and Deputy Press Secretary Emily Krueger to get the idea for an Arbor Day tree planting into action.

"We want to reach out to the community and become involved in things in the community," Amy Fomarolo, Assistant Director of the Northeast Indiana Community Service Center, said.

The NICSC relocated to Covington Plaza on Sept. 15, 2007 after leaving their longtime home at the Federal building in downtown Fort Wayne. The move was made in an effort to remain conducive to constituent accessibility, a value that became hampered by increased building security since the Oklahoma City bombing and September 11 terror attacks.

The first major tree planting in the Indian Trails Park occurred in November of 2005 when Adam Sirois (12), along with a group of Boy Scouts, planted 200 trees along the southeastern side of the park backing up to Kekionga Shores. Since then, 10% of the trees have died.

Of the new trees, 20 will be planted in place of those that have died since the planting in 2005. The remaining 80 trees will be planted temporarily in the same area until they have reached a mature enough size to be transplanted elsewhere in the park.

Trees are being supplied through the 100-tree State Senator allotment, received by State Senator David Long, and sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources. Planting half conifers, 25 of which will be Norwegian and white pines, the

SEE TREES on page 2A

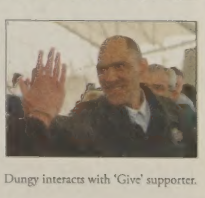
PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECE

Indianapolis Colts coach Tuny Dungy speaks to the crowd gathered at Headwaters Park last Saturday.

'Big Give' event draws big names

Oprah's crew, Colts players celebrate New Trails

"Oprah's Big Give" donated $10,000 to ABC affiliate Indiana's News-Center and the Aboite New Trails foundation to help expand the existing bike trails. These organizations were given the goal to help grow the money and turn it into something bigger. To celebrate the donations, a free event was held at Headwaters Park last Saturday. In addition to the appearance of Oprah's crew, several Indianapolis Colts players as well as Colts coach Tony Dungy came to show support.



Dungy interacts with 'Give' supporter.

Kathy deCalonne honored as Teacher of the Year

PHOTO BY KYLE DOLFUSS

Teacher of the Year Kathy deCalonne talks to students in her speech class about the aspects of public speaking.

By Erin Quinn
Co-Editor-In-Chief

28 year English teacher Kathy deCalonne is the latest recipient of Homestead's annual Teacher of the Year award.

DeCalonne, who teaches the English portion of the joint AP U.S. History/Honors 10 English Sophomore Block class as well as a junior/senior elective speech course, was given the award by a committee of past "Teachers of the Year". Previous distinguished honorees include Tanya Hack (2007), Gayle Bloom (2006), Arland Reinhard (2005), Jay Hammel (2004), Tim Decker (2003) and Jennifer Bay (2002).

The Teacher of the Year award is traditionally given to an innovative instructor who does not shy away from current educational theories and practices. Additionally, the outstanding teacher demonstrates a keen ability and willingness to work cooperatively with other colleagues.

"If you don't understand something, she'll take time to explain it to you," Sarah Ali (10) who is taking the sophomore block class, said.

NCAA basketball tournament leaves students talking past month of March

By Patrick Svitek
Writer

From Mar. 16 through Apr. 7, students spent more time than usual staring at computer screens, crunching numbers, gathering statistics and learning simple economics, but not in hopes of acing any upcoming math projects.

It must have been that time again—March Madness.

Tournament-related work comprised 14% of Southwest Allen County Schools' web traffic last month, according to SACS Network Technology Supervisor Mark East. In addition, the amount of traffic visiting sports-related websites doubled as the NCAA Men's College Basketball tournament progressed.

Concluding with Kansas's 75-68 overtime victory against Memphis, the madness of March captivated students, distracting them from the year's longest grading period, with 47 days.

"In the beginning, I watched every game there was and then I watched the final few games," Brandon Crandall (10) said. "I even had to do my homework in the car on some mornings."

Recently, a Chicago-based outplacement firm estimated that American companies could have expected to lose $1.7 billion in productivity, solely to employees' March Madness addictions. For the first time in history, the NCAA website offered live video streams of games, only adding to the growing list of workplace diversions. Regardless, teachers, especially the Head of Math Department, T.J. McCombs, believe that the tournament did not have a drastic effect on students' performance in the classroom.

"I don't really think it's about the tourney," McCombs said. "Kids might use it as an excuse, but many who did no homework [during the tournament] are the same who never do. Some probably didn't even watch the final game."

In a tournament where all first-seeded teams advanced to the Final Four, McCombs' statement doesn't come as a surprise to Eric Foster (11), who claimed this year's Big Dance, "…was too predictable to be entertaining." An even larger group of students scoff at the very notion that the 65-game marathon could interfere with time otherwise spent studying or completing assignments buried under drafts of brackets.

"I only watched a few games," Eric Kim (10) said, "but I don't think basketball could affect people's homework habits."

Instead, teachers argue that less-than-average effort from pupils following the weekend of the Final Four was a direct result of post-Spring Break procrastination.

"Lack of homework right after Spring Break could be attributed to just not being in the 'school' mode yet," McCombs said.

With final exams descending upon students rapidly, emptying ink cartridges by printing off multiple brackets and depriving oneself of sleep in order to watch second overtimes are things of the past. For all those that missed Davidson's bracket-busting Cinderella Story and Mario Chalmers' championship game-tying three-pointer, next year may just have to wait.

11 days down, 333 days to go.

'Pajama' preparations

Opening night approaches for spring musical

By Flor Ortega
Writer

A rhythmically timed chaos can be seen, heard and felt as a regular day of work enfolds at the pajama factory. Every were you look you see busy women at work making pajamas or taking a break when the boss isn't looking, and fabric can be seen everywhere. This is where this year's spring musical, The Pajama Game, takes place. It will be showing on May 9th and 10th in the auditorium.

The musical begins in the hectic scene of the pajama factory and the audience soon learns that there is a new Superintendent, Sid Sorokin, taking over. He is not expected to last long because the workers of the factory are demanding a seven and a half cent raise and plan to strike if their demands are not met soon. The Grievance Committee is the association in charge of making sure they achieve the raise and at the head of the committee is Babe Williams. It is love at first sight for Babe and Sid as they meet for the first time over a complaint filed by one of the workers; but this love will prove to become impossible as they are at opposite ends of the battle. Once they try their relationship out, it abruptly ends after a slow down happens at the factory and Sid fires Babe because she is blamed for it. Sid is heartbroken by this and soon finds a way to fix the dispute by finding a way to convince his boss of granting the raise.

Although a major part of the story is about only two of the main characters, and their relationship, there are many other characters that add to the plot as well. This gives a large number of students an opportunity to be involved when it comes to the making of the production.

"One of the reasons I chose this musical was because it isn't just two main stars. There are plenty of female roles and the musical really allows for a lot of character involvement," said Jennifer Fisher, musical director.

Cast members must learn the vocals for the musical as well as the choreography. Stage crew members are in charge of building the set, working the lights and sound, along with taking care of the props and costumes.

"The musical is definitely a lot of work, but I always love being involved and the practices are pretty fun. I hope students will come see how much we put into the show," said Lori Panyard (12), playing the part of Babe Williams.

Students feel that this year's musical is a lot more exiting compared to the previous year. The atmosphere it is based upon allows for a variety of scenes, events, and activities to take place within the production. Such as the picnic scene where a knife throw takes place.

"This musical has come a lot farther than the last. It has such a fun cast and its such a high energy show that it's never boring," said Alex Tordi (12), playing the role of Sid Sorokin.

The people involved with the production hope for successful results and look forward to the performance dates.

"I want people to be awed after seeing [the show]. The kids involved are really great and they have exceeded my expectations," said Fisher.

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remainder will be oak trees.

Students interested in volunteering at the tree planting on Apr. 25 can contact Michael Breuning at tbreuning@comcast.net to participate. Those planning to attend should bring a shovel and gloves. An auger will be on site to drill holes; however, shovels will be needed for backfilling. The planting is scheduled to begin around 4:00 p.m. and will last until 8:00 p.m., pending participation.

Volunteer organizations will accept hours from this project. Both the National Honors Society and government classes with community service requirements will count hours of service from the planting activity.

Breuning is also currently organizing a blood drive through the NICSC and is currently seeking committed students to meet the 25-signature quota to acquire the Red Cross mobile blood donation bus. Donors should be 18 years of age or have a parent present. To intern at the NICSC, stop in during the day or go online to lugar.senate.gov.

ELECTION Cont. from page 1A

issues affecting the economy and our society.

Recognizing Indiana as an "economic engine," Clinton called for Hoosiers to rally to her side.

"I would be honored to have your support and I will work my heart out for you," Clinton said.

Just a week later, on Friday, Apr. 4, Barack Obama made his appeal for Hoosier support at Wayne High School, filling the gymnasium with fans, opponents and locals and answered questions from the audience.

Reiman attended Barack Obama's visit and was chosen to question the senator.

"As a young voter, I have felt like a lot of the candidates have kind of forgotten about the younger voters in this election," Reiman said. "I wanted to know what he, Barack Obama, was planning on doing about the environment… and what he will do to help the globe that is failing us so quickly when so little has been done to help it up to this point."

Other topics of discussion ranged from his support of "common sense restrictions" on gun control and the effects of globalization on local economies to his call for "personal responsibility and social responsibility" in his desire to "strengthen communities from the bottom up."

But the events were not met without opposition. Protestors objecting to the candidates' pro-choice stance on abortion lined the walls outside of both venues.

> *"...A lot of the candidates have forgotten about the younger voters..."*
> **Andrew Reiman (12)**
> Registered Voter

"[We're here] to raise awareness that children are dying and that Hillary is trying to prolong that," Brittany Croy, 16, said.

These anti-abortion lobbyists are united under a local youth pastor, Seth Drayer, and have been present at many local political events to help spread their message that "abortion kills children" and "they deserve life.""

"We're actually just a group of friends…united for the common cause of [opposing] the murdering of children," Drayer said.

As supporter and protestor alike fill the streets and take a stand, Fort Wayne's recent national attention has put even more importance on having interested and educated young voters.

To register to vote, students need to fill out a voter registration form, which they can get from any government or social studies teacher. Although the deadline for voting in the primaries has already passed, students who will be 18 by Nov. 6 can still submit the forms to be able to vote in the general election.

Students who will not be able to vote in this year's elections can still get involved in the race. To volunteer in local campaigns or support a political party, contact the Allen County Democratic or Republican Headquarters.

Hillary next visits Lansing, Michigan on Apr. 24 to discuss environmental issues. Barack's campaign will be holding a Whitley County Canvassing Kickoff on Saturday, Apr. 19.

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Opinion

Are you registered to vote?
Indiana Primary: May 6, 2008

Issues concerning the 2008 election

Economy at forefront of current presidential race

Yogesh Jonna
writer

The 2008 election is underway, and what seems to be at the forefront of issues is the economy, and rightfully so. The economy affects who we are, how we live and is also the source of many of our fears.

One of the things that have set the United States apart from other countries is our standard of living. Americans have been known to make a lot of money and spend even more. This type of consumer spending is what seems to make our economy function; however, we now question whether it has began to falter.

For decades there has been inflation, and during those times, the percent increase in wages was greater than the inflation. However, the economy has now become an issue because of stagnant wages. The inflation rate has averaged around 3% for the last five years; however, that number has been around for decades. However, it now becomes a problem when wages do not increase along with it. Since 2004 the yearly percent increase in wage has been about 1.1% or worse.

This inflation is only one of the problems that the US economy seems to be facing, another obvious factor is the housing market. For years the housing market has been on a bubble, where prices increased rapidly. Many bought and sold houses for a lot of profit. However, now many people are upside down on their loans, and are forced to sell their homes for less than they were purchased.

Another problem we have seen develop is the credit crunch. As housing prices decline the value of bank's collateral or the value of the products which banks provide loans for has done the same. Therefore, the price to borrow money or loan raises and creates a stagnant economy. The cause of this problem may be the past overuses of credit; however, its effect on the people is direct and immediate.

With what seems to be a faltering of the economy many companies are cutting employees and are reluctant to hire new ones, simply because they do not have the resources for more employees. One of the leading problems facing college graduates is finding a job. Some companies offer two months salary as a compensation for people who were denied a job for which they were accepted and offered.

All of these economic issues lead to fear in the general public. This past year we have seen many question whether or not the US economy is in recession, and many people fear that a recession is in fact taking place. This fear can not go unanswered, and is deserving of no less than a top seat in the 2008 election.

It is debatable whether the government should respond to the economic problem through cuts on the interest rate, temporary relief through tax rebates or unruly massive spending on the people. However, it is undeniable that this problem be in the forefront of the election. Above all other issues we see that the state of our economy most directly effects the daily lives of Americans. Our next president, who ever it may be, will undoubtedly take action against these problems. The 2008 election should be most concentrated on the issues that will be addressed in the next four years, the US economy.

Foreign policy top concern for presidential candidates

Lee Farnsworth
Opinion editor

Two main issues dominate the current race for the presidency: America's economic troubles and foreign policy considerations. While the fears of prolonged recession and rising inflation certainly merit a tremendous amount of consideration from candidates and voters alike, foreign policy must surely be the most significant issue in the election.

America's image on the world stage is shaped by its roles in Iraq and Afghanistan. We are entrenched in a war which will define the dynamic of the middle east for decades, an extremely volatile and unsettled reason. Whether America is the reason for the unsettling or not, the war's consequences cannot be overlooked. The stability of Iraq is essential for checking Iran's influence on the region. Moreover, Iraq serves as a model for a democratic nation emerging from an oppressive regime. Clearly, the implications of Iraq and Afghanistan are extremely serious.

Also prominent among America's foreign policy concerns are the situations emerging with North Korea and Iran. Both nations represent a threat to the stability of Asia and the Middle East, with anti-American views in both countries rising. Concerns centering on terrorist threats also highlight the importance of a focus on foreign policy issues during the election. Intelligence reports suggest that several groups are actively pursuing nuclear weapons, something extremely unsettling for Americans. Checking the desires of several rulers and terrorist groups to obtain a nuclear arsenal is key to American national security and world security as well.

Foreign policy is also more directly effected by the presidency than is the economy. America's recession is part of a contractionary period in the business cycle, and while the government can take some action, much of the correction must come from the free market. Also, much economic oversight is carried out by the Federal Reserve Board. Certainly the president's policies are important to the economy but several outside factors also contribute. In fact, it has been suggested that the economy is naturally contracting at this point and will continue to do so no matter who is elected president. The president can furthermore have relatively little immediate impact on policy, requiring cooperation from congress. Meanwhile, as foreign policy goes, the president and his or her cabinet is much more directly involved, meeting with foreign leaders and forging solutions.

Americans have a great deal to consider as they weigh their options for the presidency in this current election. Much will be made of the economic woes of America, with demand problems and inflationary concerns. Americans are justifiably concerned with their own bottom line. But superseding these concerns should be concern for the state of the geopolitical climate, an area in which the president can have a far greater and more immediate impact anyway. The economy is largely governed by the free market and organizations separate from the executive branch. It is for this reason that Americans must make foreign policy their foremost concern this election year.

Letter to the editor: Student's view of column 'Abstinence programs stretch information'

In response to the column titled "Abstinence programs stretch information" by Ashley Hockney in the past edition of the paper, I find fault with the writer's argument that right and wrong are not black and white, but shaded in gray.

Pretend that your boyfriend of ten months decided to cheat on you with your best friend. Where is the gray area? Pretend that the person next to you finds a way to cheat on the SAT's while you studied hard and will be happy with a 1600 at best. Where is that gray area? Pretend that your friend knocks on your door at four in the morning, wasted. Where is the gray area?

Right and wrong is, in general, straight forward. And furthermore, it limits them. It is a person's unwillingness to admit a wrong, and guilt felt towards their actions that cause them to believe in a gray area. It allows them to be satisfied with who they are instead of challenging themselves to be who they could become.

Despite what the column said previously, Catholics do not agree with contraception at all; therefore, they would be against teaching about it. As a devout Catholic, I am "up in arms" to see a "regular attendee of Catholic Mass" going against the doctrine of the Church which was professed to be so strong in their life. I respect your opinions, but they are your own, and do not reflect the actual teachings of the Church. These viewpoints are individualistic. Why hide behind a title that goes against everything you believe?

The article talks repeatedly about lies that have been fed to us teens with regard to abstinence and the options that there are, but I can't think of any that would change my decision on the issue of abstinence. True Life Choices was taught in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade; we were told about sexually transmitted diseases and contraceptives. True, it is abstinence that is encouraged, but the other items are often spoken about. I am confused. Was the truth being bent in the article to persuade the readers a certain way, or did TLC really deprive us of knowing the options exist beyond abstinence? What exactly did they lie to us about? These questions are never answered in the column; you say that lies were told to us that went against "those ten little commandments" that we apparently "protect;" however, protection is not the motive. For most Christians the Ten Commandments are guides to being a believer, guides that are much more difficult to follow then the words are to read. Therefore, lies that were never told should have little effect on changing the minds of those who follow the Bible.

> *"Not all teens desire to have sex in high school or college. There are still many who wish to wait for marriage, and I hope there always will be those willing to wait."*
>
> **Becky Price** (12)
> Concerned Student

Not all teens desire to have sex in high school or college. There are still many who wish to wait for marriage, and I hope there always will be those willing to wait. Teaching about abstinence might help some people decide against sex until they are married. It doesn't makes sense, but you say that the value of abstinence is reduced because of "lies" that have been told to us throughout the years. Sex before marriage becomes acceptable through the idea that "safe" sex is the way to live. Despite what society tells us today, sex before marriage is not a good option, and using a condom doesn't make it "safe." There are many physical risks involved with sex, not to mention that emotional risks should be enough to make people second guess their decisions.

In fact, the best case scenario in the outcome of sex would be a pregnancy. In today's world, people rarely die from childbirth, but the same can't be said about sexually transmitted diseases. Pregnancy would be a relief, considering that one in four girls have a sexually transmitted disease. Some girls may say, "I have gotten my Gardasil shot," but Gardasil, a new drug for girls to help prevent cervical cancer, only eliminates four of the thirty different strands of HPV or human papilloma virus. HPV can cause sterility, and even worse death, and that is only one type of many sexually transmitted diseases.

You say, "Teens are not being taught how to protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases. They are not being taught how or where to get proven effective contraceptives." There are many things wrong with these two sentences. The most important thing is that contraception and protection against sexually transmitted disease are mutually exclusive, that means they do not relate in any way. Most contraception companies state upfront that they do not protect from HPV, HIV, AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases. So, if "proven effective" contraception can't stop those things, at least you have a good chance to remain childless, should you chose to ignore abstinence. We are being lied to if we believe that condoms will stop sexually transmitted disease, so who is the main culprit in lies now? Those trying to stop sex, or those trying to "make it safe?"

The article cited that students were told of the 31% failure rates of condoms actually only being 3%, which may be true; however, when were we ever told about a 31% failure rate? Seven years ago, we might have been told that, but I am sure condoms have improved since then; thus, their percent of failure would reduce, and I doubt many high school students have taken a sex education program recently in which a 31% statistic would be used.

I would like to know how or what information we have been deprived of; I am sure all pros and cons of having sex before marriage have been taught to us before we were ever faced with the decision ourselves. In the end it boils down to your own personal decisions. If you're willing to gamble with sex, be ready to accept the consequences, but there is no gray with that risk, the rights and wrongs of it have been presented before you. Make that area gray on your own terms if it helps you sleep at night, but remember, there is no gray area of a pregnancy test or a blood test taken to check for an sexually transmitted diseases.

Becky Price
Senior

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Editorial Policy

The Spartana is a tri-weekly production of Student Publications: Newspaper at Homestead High School. Its purpose is to enlighten, educate, and entertain. The Spartana has, and may continue to, operate as a limited open forum for the free exchange of ideas.

Staff members support the First Amendment in its entirety and oppose censorship in any form. The content of the paper is determined by the student staff. In cases of potentially controversial material, the Editorial Board will meet to decide the content of the newspaper. The staff will be assisted by the advisor in areas of professional ethics and legalities.

Material that is libelous or obscene as defined by Fort Wayne Newspapers or could cause a substantial and material disruption of the school day as defined by the Supreme Court will not be printed.

Southwest Allen County corporation encourages vigorous treatment of a wide range of subject matter, including controversial issues, and student journalist are free to report and to editorialize on events, ideas and issues in their high school, community, nation, and world according to policy number 4150.

Public input will be accepted from the Homestead community in the form of letters to the editor. Letters must follow standards concerning libel or obscenity. Those that could cause a substantial and material disruption to the school day will not be printed. Letters can be e-mailed to the Sparana at thespartana@gmail.com or dropped off in room 620.

Diving into Change

There are three types of swimming pool goers. First, there are those who go to the pool with no intention whatsoever of actually getting into the water. Instead, they have come to simply roast on a poolside towel, watching the hours pass by.

Then there are those who hesitantly creep down the slippery steps one at a time, slowly inching their way into the water. Once they get used to the chilled temperature, they linger in the shallow end for a short time before heading for a towel. It is obvious that they do not really want to be there, and that they have come merely out of obligation to parents, children or friends.

By Kara Hackett
Life Editor

Finally, there are those pool-loving maniacs who cannot even wait to apply sunscreen before diving headfirst into the refreshing stream. As insanely cold and unbearable as it may be, these folks hardly seem to notice the devastating temperature of the water or the occasional floating bug.

Spring is the season of change, and making changes in life has always reminded me of getting into a pool; the kind that has water so cold that it is surprising that there is not a layer of ice on top of it.

Now, change can come in a variety of ways. Around town, one of the areas where change takes form is in the new branches of well-known eateries and supermarkets that are in the works.

In fact, with all of the new developments, Illinois Road is under construction, as it is being widened to four lanes to accommodate the increasing flow of traffic in the area. Testifying that change breeds sacrifice, massacred trees lay in haphazard piles at the feet of their stubby trunks along the barren roadside.

In our constantly developing society, change is happening in every way, shape and form. While some changes are small and impersonal, others seem monumental and life-altering.

Perhaps the most profound changes are those that take place in our personal lives, affecting us directly and making us turn a critical eye on ourselves and our decisions rather than those of our neighbors.

In the midst of this transforming season, I have discovered that like arctic water, the thought of making even the smallest changes in life can seem mortifying at first, but after you get used to it, it is not so bad. Actually, change is surprisingly refreshing.

Recently, I have been faced with many changes, and although they seemed rather intimidating and discouraging at one time, I am proud to say that, with the council of a few good friends and my faith for guidance, I have been able to overcome the obstacles in my path, taking with me more knowledge with every experience.

I have come to realize that comfort is a dangerous emotion, tempting us to wade in the shallow end of the pool of life. When we become too comfortable with ourselves and our current situations, we tend to miss out on all of the incredible opportunities involved in the game of chance.

Just as a city cannot go very long without developing new attractions and widening its roads, we as human beings cannot exist without developing new ideas and philosophies. Thus, change is necessary, urging us to dive into the torrent water of life.

There are several ways to dive into change. Some choose to dive acrobatically, hardly making even a ripple in the water. They have incredible potential; however, they never make themselves noticeable. Likewise, it seems that there are all too many people who make changes in their lives only to put forth the minimum effort required to emulate transformation. They want to make a difference, but they are reluctant to let their actions have any real effect on the people around them or even themselves for that matter. They are too comfortable.

> *"I have come to realize that comfort is a dangerous emotion, tempting us to wade in the shallow end of the pool of life."*
>
> Kara Hackett
> Life Editor

Then there is always that kid who does a huge cannon ball, creating a tidal wave, soaking everyone within a ten foot diameter: fellow divers, unwilling step sitters and lazy poolside loungers alike. In a similar manner, as we go about making large changes and taking big chances, not only will our decisions affect our lives, but also the consequences of our bold actions will have a profound impact on the lives of those around us, for better or worse.

The bottom line: change is not an easy process. Even for those who dive right into all of life's challenges, most of the time they are just as terrified as those who sit on the sidelines; however, within the heart of a diver lies something that every step sitter lacks—courage. Not only to recognize the need for change, but also to carryout the necessary actions to bring about such change. For courage is not the absence of fear, rather it is the ability to take action despite fear. Sure it can be miserable and uncomfortable at times to face something that scares you, but eventually you get used to it, and you may even learn to enjoy it.

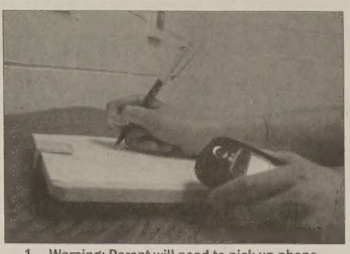
If you happen to find yourself unwillingly drenched this spring, just remember, it takes a brave person to be a cannon ball diver. For one, they have to deal with dozens of complaints from grumpy old ladies who do not want their hair to get wet.

These brave souls also have to bear the occasional grievances of shivering step-sitters and unsuspecting poolside victims; but who knows, after being drenched in the revitalizing water, some of those step-sitters and loungers might decide to dive in, too.

Rules keep fairness in school

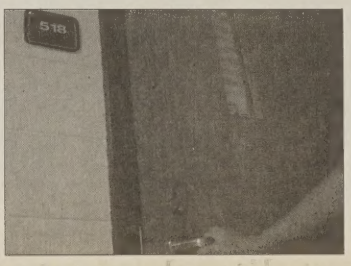
CELL PHONE REPERCUSSIONS

All actions have consequences and if you are caught with your cellular device at school you will be punished. The number of times you are caught utilizing your cell phone will determine how serious the punishment will be.



1. Warning: Parent will need to pick up phone.

2. One day Saturday school: Parent will need to pick up electronic device.



3. In school suspension: Parent will need to pick up electronic device.

By Ian Strelec
Writer

Often enough, I hear complaints regarding the administration and their policies. In fact, I complain about it myself quite a bit. But the fact of the matter is this: they up the rules because we keep defying them.

The administration instituted random drug testing because students insist on continuing to drink underage. Drinking underage is illegal. It may not be the school's responsibility to monitor student's activities outside of school, but they are still trying to protect the students, regardless of the effectiveness of their methods.

> *"The point is that the rules are there for a reason."*
>
> Ian Strelec
> Writer

The cell phone policy stands as another hot topic for debate. The administration says that cell phone use in school can easily be used for cheating, and that they can be major distractions in class. While it is extreme that teachers are expected to take phones away even if they are spotted while turned off, it is necessary.

It is necessary because students seem to think it acceptable to text anyway and just learn to hide it so that the teachers fail to notice. It is necessary because some students seem to think it acceptable to complain about the administration's rules and then promptly turn around and blatantly defy them. This policy is necessary, in essence, because some of the students insist on being disrespectful to those students who do actually follow the rules.

School is boring, yes. Your friends are bored, which is understandable. But honestly, there is simply no conversation that cannot wait the half hour it will take for you to get to the next passing period. It is ridiculous to think that it is absolutely necessary for you to continue holding your conversations despite the school's rules against it. Why is it so important?

Our parents survived without cell phones, let alone texting. Many parents grew up without computers, and grandparents sometimes went so far as to grow up without TVs. The cell phones are convenient, yes. Texting has its uses, yes. But it simply has no place in the classroom.

Students may complain about the administration's rules, but they keep getting harsher (and in some ways, more and more unfair to the students who do follow the rules) because some of the students continue to find ways to sneak around behind the rules. If that were to stop happening - if the students would sit down, pay attention, and set the phones aside for the couple hours it takes to get through school, the administration would not have to resort to no-tolerance policies to keep their tests fair.

In addition, cheating is another issue the administration tries to stop and sometimes cannot. This problem has been plaguing schools for a very, very long time, and one unlikely to change significantly in the future. But it's worth a shot.

Look at it this way: you have the students who study, pay attention in class and work hard for their grades. Then you have the select few who don't work, don't pay attention and still think it is okay to get good grades. The point is for your grades to reflect your effort and understanding of the material you are learning. Many teachers, though, also curve their grades based on performance of the students. What if those people's insistence on breaking the rules manages to disrupt that curve and hurt someone else's grades - someone who actually deserved their grade? How is that fair?

The point is that the rules are there for a reason. They may not make sense all the time, they may be extreme in cases, and some even deserve to be opposed, but they are there to keep the school safe, keep the school drug-free, and make sure that the grading system means something. Agree or disagree with the administration or their policies, breaking the rules helps no one and only makes things worse.

You don't have to like them. But you should at least respect the fact that the administration is trying to help the students, however problematic the results may be sometimes.

Senioritis hits home final semester

By Lee Farnsworth
Opinion Editor

Senioritis is the tendency of seniors to slack off dramatically during at least the last half of the school year. General apathy, coupled with the fact that second semester grades have no affect on class rank, causes senior interest in school to wane considerably as the year winds down. But can anyone really blame seniors for not caring? Colleges will not revoke admission offers, barring major decline in grade, and the grades do not affect class standing as mentioned earlier. So instead of lamenting senioritis, it should be embraced with a new school policy: students with a B or higher in a given class should not be required to take a final in that class, but should instead be able to take an average of their nine weeks grades.

By eliminating second semester finals for seniors with higher grades, administrators would actually curb senioritis as seniors would work harder in their classes to avoid final exams. The reward would force students to do work and put in effort that they otherwise might forgo. Only seniors be exempt from finals because the problem of senioritis is exclusive to the senior class; the problem of diminishing effort is largely contained within the senior class.

People may point to other solutions to the problem of senioritis. However, second semester grades cannot easily be included in class rank considerations due to the timing of graduation. There is no way to make seniors more accountable. The change in attitude must come from a desire from seniors to change their behavior. The exemption is also appropriate because it rewards good students rather than penalizing students whose grades have slipped. The positive reinforcement would likely do more the change senior students outlook on the second semester than any penalty would. Of course senioritis will still exist among some seniors, but a large number of students will surely think twice about skipping assignments or blowing off studying for a test if they know it could mean having to take finals at semester's end.

During their senior year, students are also working to find summer employment and pursue other educational opportunities such as higher ed. The possibility of not having to worry about finals would surely be enticing to the seniors who have other concerns.

Some may ask why, if they don't care about other parts of the class, seniors would care about finals. However, the final represents such a large part of the final grade that students cannot afford to fail finals or their grades may fall to levels that will have consequences that follow them to college.

Senioritis is an established part of senior year at Homestead. However, a policy of allowing high-performing seniors to skip finals would increase student interest and help to combat senioritis at Homestead.

From the Mind of the Mighty Quinn

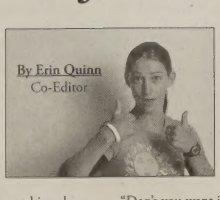
It is no secret that the months of April and May are the busiest of the entire school year. In the upcoming weeks, I have to decide where to go to college, cram an exorbitant amount of knowledge about statistics, psychology and composition into my head in preparation for the coming AP exams, manage to spend twenty five hours honing my lifeguarding skills and find time somewhere in between to enjoy the last few weeks of high school. Oh, and I have to somehow survive prom.

Amidst the appeal of the pleasant weather that calls out for us to indulge in the sweet sin of procrastination, it the the annual junior senior formal dance that is more of a distraction than anything. Upperclassmen are more likely to be calling local snazzy restaurants during free time, figuring out pre-prom dinner groups during passing periods or making use of their detective skills to find out who's considering asking who than staying within the bounds of secondary education's curriculum.

Learning? Hardly.

Studying? Never.

Try online side-by-side dress comparisons, or in-depth scientific conversations about the shades of the color spectrum that go into the perfect matching shoe.



By Erin Quinn
Co-Editor

I can't figure out if the topic of prom is a mere universal icebreaker that is used and abused in order to spark a chat, or the conversational equivalent of wildfire. This much I know: prom is inescapable.

Deep down, I somewhat admire the zeal of prom-enthusiasts, and I'm certainly not aiming to degrade them. Just because I don't get excited for pouffy, pastel dresses and thrive on losing the sensation in my cheek mucles after posing for hundreds of cameras doesn't mean I can't understand why other people embrace the much anticipated event.

But, I hear more and more about the dreadful dance each day. People keep thinking that if they tell me, "but...this is your senior prom!" my perception will drastically alter. Thanks, but I was aware of that fact. They ask, "Don't you want it to be perfect?" Well, not really.

What's the good in a perfect evening, the evening in which one of your friends doesn't flee to the bathroom after their date's finger bled on their dress, or the evening where someone does not pass out on the dance floor, or the evening where a sweaty mess of a mosh pit forms for a techno song? Where are the memories in perfection?

When I think about prom, I think about the painful memory of watching my friends walk out on me, not the glamorous scene most people expect me to recall. I think about the longest two minutes of my life, when I couldn't squash a tiara on my stiffly teased head for the life of me. I think about the emergency laundry party in the bathroom, of the lovable student who went down for the count after too much dancing, and the amazing effect of a single Cascada song.

Those are the things you remember about a dance. Flawless is boring. Flawless is overrated. Flawless is forgettable.

I'm not denying that I am among the majority that wants to get swept off their feet this year in the weeks leading to prom. But it might just be more exciting if I tripped or was accidentally dropped in the process.

I don't see much good in things that are perfect. There is good to be found in the prom that doesn't go according to plan in much the same way there is good to be found within people who are flawed. We must learn to see the good in those proms the same way we must be able to see the good in each and every one of us who possess humanly downfalls.

If you don't get the perfect date, or your dress is just a tad bit too long, or your reservation is a half hour late, relax. It's perfect.

College checklist

It is a big step. Sophomores and Juniors, this handy checklist will help you stay on the right track. Story page 6A.

Take the PSAT in October and research fields of interest

Sophomores
- take the PSAT in October
- look at schools online and research fields of interest
- prepare for AP exams (good

Winter
- Check PSAT scores start

Spring brings with it changing fashions

With warmer weather comes shorter clothing, how to solve dress code conflicts

By Hana Hawash
Writer

It is springtime again, and you know what that means, mini-skirts for the ladies and slouchy shorts for the boys. While these are the average springtime favorite, they can conflict with the ever-devastating dress code, perhaps because the minis seem to be the proper length for a person three feet tall.

When it comes to men, short shorts are not really the problem it is the other end of the pants that causes teachers to wince at the sight. Boy's pants are falling, and it seems they have forgotten their belts. Baggy pants have ever been a problem with the boys, though it is less now than previous years, but boxers are still being proudly displayed by some. While girls have a lot of accessories and different styles of clothing that they have to keep up with, guys usually tend to stick with simpler styles.

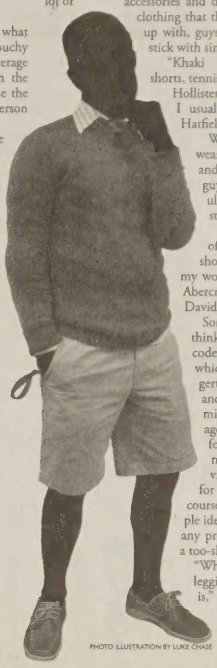


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LUKE CHASE

"Khaki shorts, cargo shorts, tennis shoes and like a Hollister shirt [are what I usually wear]," Nick Hatfield (12) said.

While some boys wear plain t-shirts and shorts, some guys have a particular style that they stick to.

"[I wear] cut-offs,...slip on shoes with no socks, my workout pants and Abercrombie boxers," David Alger (12) said.

Some students think that the dress code is too strict, which enforces fingertip length skirts and shorts, no bare midriffs, cleavage or shoulders for girls and no muscle shirts or visible boxers for the chaps. Of course, there are simple ideas that can solve any problem involving a too-short skirt.

"What I really like is leggings under minis," Lauren Fuller, Special Needs teacher, said.

Some of the older trends, like wearing leggings under a mini, can be updated by wearing a long tunic or short dress over the leggings.

Another basic trend is cinching the waist with a wide, bold colored belt. Bold jewelry can be added to a basic dress to create another simple, yet stylish outfit.

With so many new trends this spring, finding school appropriate outfits is as easy as a trip to your local Wal-Mart. While other stores like Hollister and American Eagle are more likely to be hit first because of their brand name labels, Wal-Mart has great styles at low prices for those students who are trying to save for college. Not only does Wal-Mart have a great selection of flats for less than ten dollars, they also have spring dresses, cropped jackets and all your needs for the beach. Although the clothes are not exactly what you might expect to find at a more expensive store, they are still great choices.

On the other hand, if cost is not a concern, some great stores to shop at for the season's best styles are Von Maur and Forever 21. Von Maur has the newest styles and trends before the other stores in the area. The clothes are a bit pricier because they sell other brands, rather than their own, but they also have racks full of clean cut, simple pieces that would be great for a college interview. They also boast racks that include tops with bows, lace, buttons, stripes, Hello Kitty and anything else you could think of to put on a shirt. But while their clothing section is magnificent, their shoe area is a shoe lovers dream. They have section after section of the most expensive, trendy and unusual styles you have ever seen.

Another great choice for new trends is Forever 21. This is the store for those who like to make a statement. Freedom of fashion expression is let loose in this store, which contains everything from orange skinny pants to sequin covered mini dresses. Forever 21 sells the new trends before they actually become trends, and is very affordable compared to other stores. Not only do they sell clothes, but also jewelry, shoes and every other accessory you will need to wear under long tunic to dress up a plain outfit.

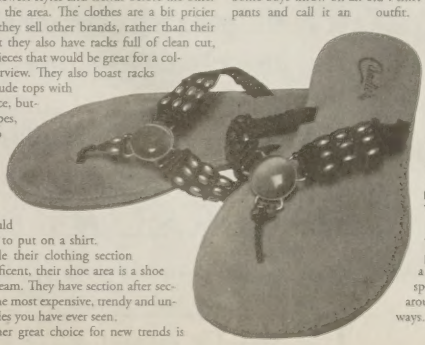
"I like the skirts and dresses, and the bright colors," Andrea Layton (12) said.

Skirts are definitely the way to go this spring; go into any store from Old Navy, to Gap and you will find light, free flowing skirts.

As for the boys, adhering to the dress code is much simpler, although some boys are very serious about what they wear, some just joke around about what they wear.

"My favorite trend for spring would be shorts with pockets," Anthony Rai (12) said.

Though Rai is not serious about fashion, he does represent a majority of boys in high school. Some boys throw on an old t-shirt and a pair of pants and call it an outfit.



While it is important to follow the dress code, there are outlets that allow students to express themselves through fashion. With the changing weather, expect to see a rise in new spring fashion around the hallways.

Post-spring break mentality slows student work ethic

By Derek Luttrell
Writer

Whether one joins a mission trip to Puerto Rico, visits the volcanoes of Hawaii or merely stays home and sleeps in, spring break offers students and faculty alike a time of ease away from the demanding academic season. The aftermath, however, seems to dwell on even the best of us with a cynical feeling of returning to the real world.

"Spring break definitely affected my work ethic [toward school] for the worse," Sam Chapman (11) said. "The week before [break] we really didn't do much in any of our classes, and then when we get back, teachers load us with homework, quizzes and tests. [Teachers] try to make up for the week before, but it really does overwhelm students and we don't perform as well. Once you get back to Fort Wayne, all you wish is to be anywhere but home."

The feeling a student gets after returning from a week away from administration and scantrons is often one of melancholy and an oblivion to reality.

"I asked my parents if I could stay home the first Monday after break," Megan Davis (11) said. "Knowing I was on my way home and back to school actually got a little depressing, and I didn't really care about homework or anything the first couple of days back."

Aside from the emotional effects of crossing back into the Fort Wayne border, some coinciding physical side effects also hinder a student's academic ability.

"On my first night home from Destin [Florida], it felt like it was really early when I went to bed, because I was used to it only being 9:00 at night at that time," Dan Vandeveer (9) said. "Plus, waking up seemed especially early, so I was really tired and not ready to get up for school."

For those who opted out of the beach parties and over-exposure to ultraviolet radiation, spring break may have not been such a big deal after all.

"I woke up at 7:00 a.m. everyday during break," Phil O'Brien (10) said. "My internal clock woke me up on its normal course that it does during the school week, so I wasn't really affected at all."

This nonchalant attitude by students during the weeks preceding and following spring break plays an important role in the day of the administration as well.

"[The attendance office] spent six hours on Friday alone listening to the messages of parents calling in for their kids," Anne Matheis, Attendance Supervisor, said.

According to Matheis, there were a total of nearly 600 absences on the Friday before the first weekend, and only a couple hundred fewer on the first Monday following the return from break.

The closing of three different airlines, occurring all during the week of spring break, also hindered the travel plans and routes of students and faculty during their vacation; one legitimate reason for the skyrocketed absentee roster.

"My family and I flew Skybus for spring break, and by the time break was over, we were told [Skybus] was closing and it flew its last flight on Friday," Chapman said. "[My family] had to get a rental car and make the 13 hour drive back home from New York City, instead of the anticipated one hour flight."

The other two airlines, along with Skybus, that have been forced to file bankruptcy are Aloha and ATA Airlines; all suffering from the same predominant cause of uprising jet fuel prices that outshined the airlines' low-cost passenger flights, according to CNN.com.

"My family flew ATA airlines, one of the three airlines to go bankrupt during break," Banas said. "We got back from Hawaii three days later than we were supposed to, which was a huge mess, especially for school, but I didn't really mind staying in Hawaii for a little longer."

Also according to CNN.com, all customers with a Saturday or later ticket are currently able to be refunded through their credit card company, but all cash or check purchases are apparently lost in translation.

Though inevitable happenings may occur that can harm one's academic progress, and regardless of transportation debacles or supreme cases of procrastination, spring break is arguably one of the biggest highlights of the school year that is always looked forward to by all.

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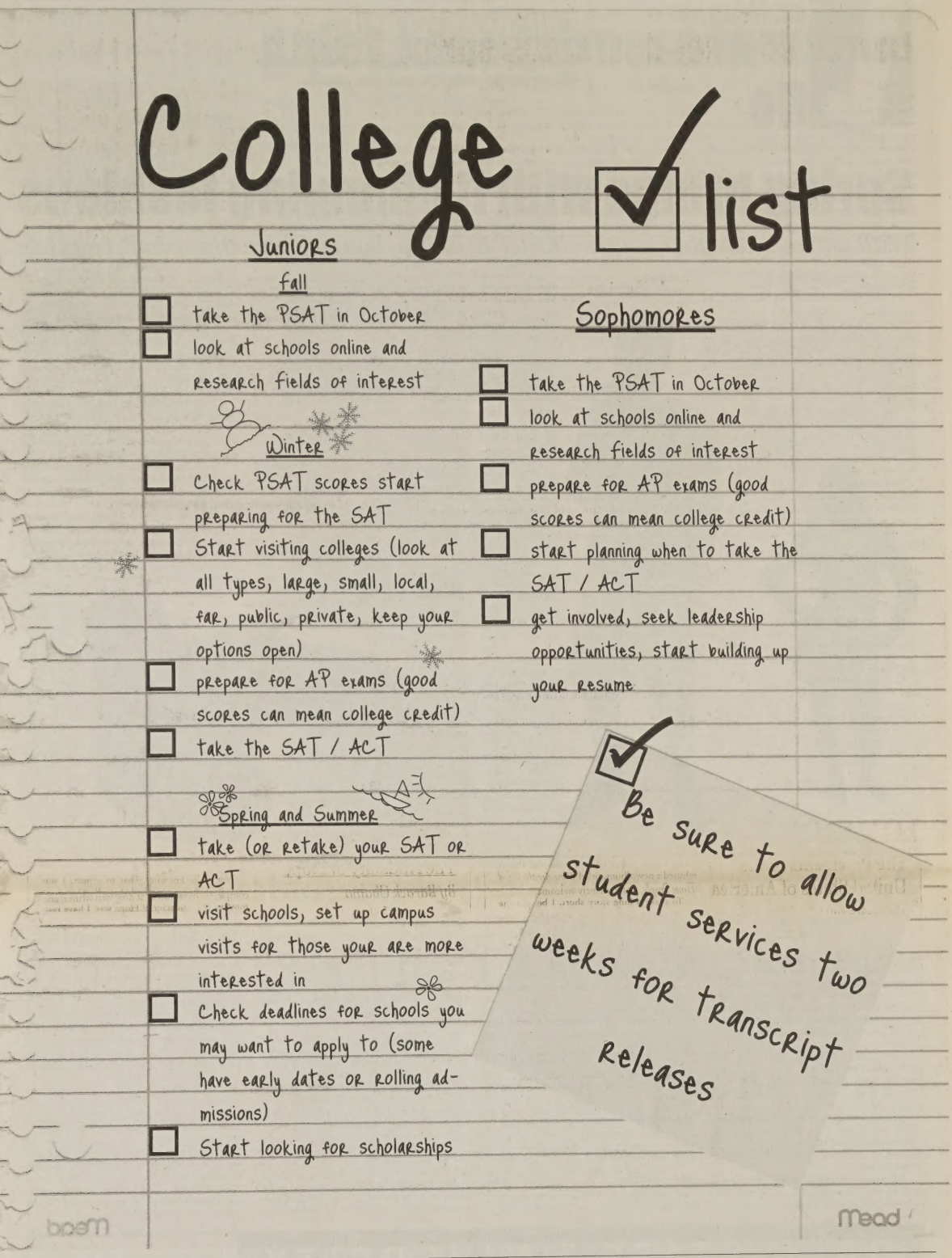

College list
Juniors
fall
take the PSAT in October
look at schools online and research fields of interest
Winter
Check PSAT scores start preparing for the SAT
Start visiting colleges (look at all types, large, small, local, far, public, private, keep your options open)
prepare for AP exams (good scores can mean college credit)
take the SAT / ACT
Spring and Summer
take (or retake) your SAT or ACT
visit schools, set up campus visits for those your are more interested in
Check deadlines for schools you may want to apply to (some have early dates or rolling admissions)
Start looking for scholarships
Sophomores
take the PSAT in October
look at schools online and research fields of interest
prepare for AP exams (good scores can mean college credit)
start planning when to take the SAT / ACT
get involved, seek leadership opportunities, start building up your resume
Be sure to allow student services two weeks for transcript releases
Mead

Post graduation realities sink in for seniors

While being on their own is exciting for some, frightening for others

Taylor Harruff
Life Editor

Minute-by-minute, the days pass by and students find themselves that much closer to the freedom of summer. No more all-nighters, welcomed by early mornings and countless tests crammed with more questions than your mind can handle. Students can temporarily say goodbye to those pesky scantrons, and the now infamous minute bell.

With summer quickly approaching, many students find themselves anticipating weekends at the lake or just the joy of sleeping until the late afternoon. However, for a lot of seniors, this summer is not just about having fun.

"I look forward to having time to relax," Colleen O'Hara (12) said. "But I plan on working a lot, so I can save up money for college."

That is right, college. For the class of 2008, this scary reality is finally here. No longer can we say, "Well, when I'm a senior…." We are now left with the 500 pound responsibility of thinking, living and maintaining an acceptable GPA all on our own.

"It's crazy that we are almost done with high school," Danny Reecer (12) said. "It went by so fast, it's kind of scary."

Seniors can now look forward to the excitement of meeting their college roommates for the first time and moving into their humble abodes, better known as dorm rooms.

"Next year is going to be amazing," O'Hara said. "I can't wait to be on my own."

While the thought of not having any house rules and choosing when you want to go class seems intriguing for most, it is also a scary reality that can overwhelm students.

"It is weird that we are going to be away from home all the time," Megan Miller (12) said. "It's exciting, but we have so much responsibility now."

College is made out to be the best time of your life. Students are expected to find themselves, and what interests them best. Though it is a life changing event that most look forward to, going away to college and leaving the comfort of high school is scary, and not often mentioned.

> *"Originally I had already decided on Purdue but I went on a college visit one weekend to IU, and I fell in love. Immediately after that I cancelled my housing at Purdue, and submitted my housing to IU."*
>
> **Megan Miller**
> Senior

"College is made out to be so exciting," Miller said. "But I don't think people realize how much effort goes into deciding where you want to go."

With college also comes the dreaded SAT's, ACT's, AP Testing, and the painstaking task of being sure that senioritis does not totally demolish your report card.

"I started preparing for college like the end of sophomore year," O'Hara said. "We had to sign up for testing, and make sure we had an idea as to where we wanted to go."

While it is emphasized that college is going to take some work, it is fair to say that some students have no clue as to just how dedicated one must be in order to reach their goal.

"I applied to about three or four different schools," Miller said. "I think three out of the four required an admissions essay, which took forever."

Once they have completed the endless hours of filling out countless applications, students are then faced with the antagonizing wait for "the letter." A high school senior's future all depends on whether or not they are accepted into their school of choice.

"Luckily, I already knew where I wanted to go," Reecer said. "I applied pretty early too, so I got my acceptance letter before a lot of people."

Once the acceptance letters have been read, seniors are faced with the decision as to where they will attend that fall. If students have more than one school in which they would like to attend, this decision can often times prove challenging.

"Originally I had already decided on Purdue," Miller said. "But I went on a college visit one weekend to IU, and I fell in love. Immediately after that I cancelled my housing at Purdue, and submitted my housing to IU."

While college may seem like all fun and games, it is important to remember that is a long process which takes time and dedication. Students have to work for their future, and taking the initiative to plan ahead, means a lot of work on the way. While college is going to be a once-in-a-lifetime incredible experience, the road leading there can often be intimidating and scary.

"Yeah, I am scared about next year," O'Hara said. "It's something you can't really plan for, and just have to take it one day at a time."

Lauren Wesner dedicates spring break to mission work

While most students spent Spring Break relaxing in the sun or pursuing personal endeavors, Lauren Wesner (11) took advantage of the opportunity to help others around the globe on a mission trip to Belize. Traveling and performing with a worship team from The Chapel, Lauren learned first hand of the hardships of living in a foreign country as well as incredible faith required of those who face poverty on a daily basis.

Spartana: What inspired you to go to Belize as opposed to a more leisurely vacation spot?

Lauren: I went [to Belize] because it was my last opportunity to go through [The Chapel] since I'm graduating. Our church was choosing between two trips, so we actually had two different teams go on two different trips: one was to Biloxi, Mississippi and the other was to Belize.

The cost was kind of an issue, but I thought that I could raise the funds [necessary]. I [ultimately] decided on Belize because it was my last opportunity to go before graduation.

Spartana: To what part of Belize did you travel and what did you do once there?

Lauren: We went to a little town called Corozol. It's like two hours out of Belize City. We basically took a worship team and we had someone playing the base guitar, acoustic guitar and drums and the rest of the team sang and did percussion. We performed at three or four churches and these three different schools. The first performance of the week, there was not a big turn out, but I think word got around and [attendance increased].

We started on Sunday and we [preformed during] a church service. Then we did a Sunday night concert at the church. [The rest of the trip] we would go to different schools during the day and perform and do different concerts because there were a lot of people [who came to watch]. Then we would usually have a concert every night. We preformed at least three concerts a day so we were pretty busy. [We also traveled] about a half an hour each day. It really wouldn't have been that far, but the difficult roads made it really crazy.

We didn't get to bed until about 10:30 p.m. or 11:00 p.m. It differed throughout the trip, but then we would wake up at like 5:30 a.m. or 6:30 a.m. every morning and we would have breakfast at 6:00 a.m. or 7:00 a.m.

Spartana: Was the language barrier an issue?

Lauren: Most of the people spoke English. I think it was like 90%, but all of them spoke Spanish. It was funny because the church service we had the first night we were there was spoken all in Spanish. So I was translating to people and trying to keep up. I'm a forth year Spanish student so that was helpful. It was funny because most of the people on the trip took French so they were like, "What are they saying?" But it was good because the pastor would act out some of the sermon too so they could pick up on what was going on.

It was hard because they read the Bible in Spanish too so he would say in Spanish what chapter and verse they were reading, so it was difficult trying to pick that up. The father of the missionary family would have to translate where we were reading.

Spartana: What was your favorite part of the trip?

Lauren: That's a hard question. I would say just hanging out with the kids. Before we performed we had this mingling time and they stuck around [for the show] so we just talked afterwards. It was interesting to see what their lifestyle was like. They are very slow-paced compared to us....We have plans months in advance to get together with people, but they plan the night before and say, "Hey do you want to do this?" So there was a lot of short term notice.

Also, at the end [of our trip] we did this "wind down" thing where we went to San Pedro and went snorkeling, so that was fun too. It was a 20 minute plane ride over water so it was neat.

Spartana: Did you meet any particularly interesting people?

Lauren: Yes, I'm actually staying in contact with a girl named Perla through mail. I met her [during one of our] high school performances. We had to do this thing where we interviewed first term kids who are basically like freshman [in America]. They were doing science fair projects, and we had to ask them all of these questions, like, "What science fair project are you doing?" They even made us ask wacky things like, "What is your favorite super hero?" So we started talking about science fair stuff because we were supposed to, but then we got off topic and we started talking and so it was fun. [Perla] kept asking where we were performing, and she would go [see us] every night.

Spartana: What cultural differences did you notice between Belize and America?

Lauren: Not many people there are musical because we were teaching them to play the guitar and piano. So their churches are not as musical as [American churches]. [Also] their clapping was way off beat. You're supposed to clap on beats two and four to keep rhythm, but they clap the opposite. They clap fast and then slow. It's kind of cool though because there was this one guy who was an amazing singer, and he went though this junior college. So he came back and he was telling us, "I can't do both! I can't clap and sing at the same time!" So for a while he would just start clapping and the rest of the time we would be just singing. It was pretty cool.

Spartana: What was the most difficult aspect of living in Belize?

Lauren: The temperature was a big change because it was like 27 degrees when we left Indiana and [in Belize] it was like 80 degrees and it felt like 90. I don't know what it really got up to, and we had to wear capris and polo shirts every day to go to the schools and church. We couldn't wear anything sleeveless because they are more conservative there.

It was very hot and humid, and the hotel had no air conditioning so a lot of times I took cold showers, and you couldn't drink the water…so you had to be really conscious in the shower not to open your mouth. Then there was another interesting thing where you couldn't flush toilet paper down the toilet. You would have to just throw it away.

Spartana: What was the most valuable lesson you learned from your experiences?

Lauren: I realized after the trip that a lot of people don't need the stuff that they have because there were people [in Belize] walking around with backpacks who said that all they needed was a relationship with God and what they had in their backpack. So they were just really strong. We met this one guy at a soccer field and it was just amazing to know that he was okay with living with basically nothing.

Spartana: What new appreciations do you have for America after having visited a less fortunate country?

Lauren: It really made me appreciate the roads we have [in America]. The roads [in Belize] were extremely bumpy. It was insane. The speed bumps were trapezoid shaped so you would go up one side, and then when you dropped to the other side, the back end of the car would go up and then you'd go down. That was the regular speed bump, and then the small speed bumps had potholes all over them.

Spartana: What would you say to encourage others to take part in mission trips overseas?

Lauren: I would tell them that money is not an issue. I thought it would be but it is really easy if you know a lot of people and someone gives $20.00 here and there it really adds up.

Also, you don't have to be the strongest Christian to go because faith [fluctuates]. I mean, there are hard times and you get through them, but even if you're not a strong Christian, it could change your life.

musicreview

The Presidents of the United States of America

These Are the Good Times People

★★★☆

By Brad Lufkin
Writer

For a while, I was going through withdrawal; I hadn't bought a new CD in about a week. It was miserable. But while perusing around the over-priced music section of Barnes & Noble, I ran into one of my favorite bands. I hadn't listened to them in a while, so I decided to pop in and say hello. To my surprise, The Presidents of the United States of America had released a new album.

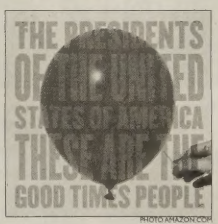


PHOTO AMAZON.COM

When the phrase "The President of the United States," came up in the past few months, the only things that came to mind were the Presidential nominees. I'd heard more than enough about them, so this little surprise that PUSA released a new album, titled *These Are the Good Times People*, was extremely welcome.

To make a long story short, I bought the album, and it took me back to good old days; way back to when Push Pops were popular. The album maintains the classic PUSA feel that they created with "Peaches," "Kitty" and "Lump," but throws in some new tricks.

The odd, comedic lyrics and lively beats that fans have come to know and love are there, but The Presidents threw in some bluegrass and some swing-dance just to top it off. "French Girl" and "Rot in the Sun" are throwbacks to those earlier hits, while "Truckstop Butterfly" and "Flame is Love" add some of those new elements.

The happy, bright music that PUSA creates just isn't like a lot of the mainstream rubbish that's played too often today. It's rejuvenating and gives you hope for the future of the music industry. Thankfully, after the two year hiatus from music that had fans worried that The Presidents were no more, they have come back, ready for reelection.

bookreview

The Audacity of Hope

By Barack Obama

★★★☆

By Greg Kyes
Business Manager

As a first time voter this presidential election, I have been bombarded with the struggle of which presidential candidate I will support. McCain, Clinton, Obama, they all have their positives and negatives. This past spring break, I decided that I would dedicate my beach reading to something more productive and meaningful than The Da Vinci Code or Stephen King. I decided I would read something that would help me get a better idea of who to I should vote for. For no particular reason, I chose Senator Barack Obama's latest book, The Audacity of Hope.

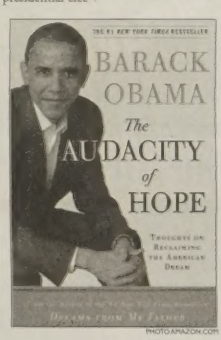
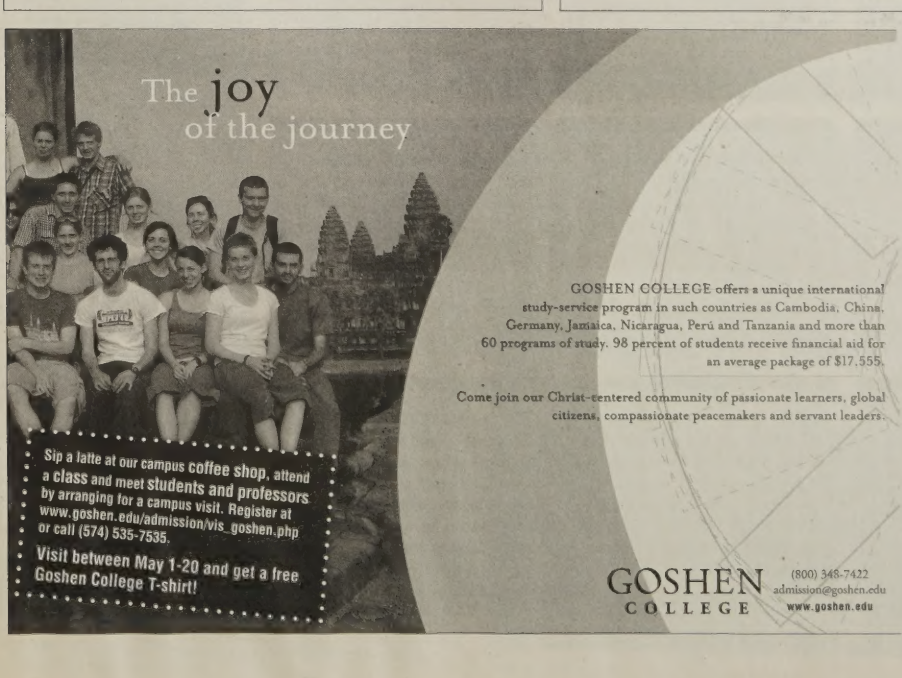


PHOTO AMAZON.COM

Not really knowing what to expect, I was completely blown away at how well written and moving The Audacity of Hope was. I have read a few other politically based books and have never as very impressed as I was while reading Obama's book.

They tend to be too wordy, too simple or just plain too boring. Senator Obama's book, however, is intelligent and logical, as well as fairly easy to read. Also, it didn't have too much or too little of any one thing. Obama effectively balances the subject of his political work and ideals, with his personal background information.

If you want a way to get a better idea of a presidential candidate, Barack Obama and The Audacity of Hope is a great place to start. Although I can't say that I have completely decided Senator Obama will make the best presidential candidate, I am certain that he is a fantastic writer.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WHAT'S YOUR enneagram

ENNEAGRAM SYSTEM OFFERS IN-DEPTH LOOK INTO THE NINE DISTINCT HUMAN PERSONALITY TYPES

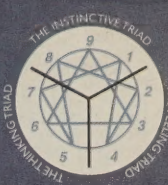
PHOTO BY CANDICE BERTI

1. Margaret Distler (11) 2. Kalyn Jorgensen (11) 3. Yogesh Jonna (11) 4. Katherine DeRosa (12) 5. Brad Lufkin (11) 6. Haley Zimmerman (11) 7. Shane Luttrell (12) 8. Chris Rozman (11) 9. Kara Busse (11)

THE ENNEAGRAM IS AN ANCIENT PERSONALITY SYSTEM that describes nine distinct patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. The word "ennea" is Greek for nine and "gram" means model. Hence, the Enneagram is a diagram with nine points representing the nine personality patterns. Underneath each of the nine patterns is a basic proposition or belief about what you need in life for survival and satisfaction. Each person at birth has a basic type that cannot be changed. However, a person may not relate to all of the descriptions within their basic type. Everyone will at certain times fluctuate between the healthy, average, and unhealthy traits that make up each personality type.

The Enneagram model is also divided into three triads; the instinctive triad, the feeling triad, and the thinking triad. Each triad consists of three personality types that have in common the assets and liabilities of that triad. Each triad also has a dominant emotion (left below) that triad members unconsciously display the most when they feel disconnected with their inner self.

ALL DIAGRAMS: WWW.ENNEAGRAMINSTITUTE.COM



DESCRIPTIONS OF THE NINE PERSONALITY TYPES

1. REFORMERS are idealistic and strive for perfection. Morals and ethics drive them. They live with an overbearing internal critic that never rests. They are always comparing themselves to others and are overly concerned with external criticism.

2. HELPERS believe you must give fully to others to be loved. Consequently, Helpers are caring, helpful, supportive and relationship-oriented, but also can be prideful, overly intrusive and demanding.

3. ACHIEVERS derive self-worth from external success. They are highly skilled at adapting in order to gain accolades. Consequently, Achievers are industrious, fast-paced, goal-focused and efficiency-oriented, but also can be inattentive to feelings, impatient and image-driven.

4. INDIVIDUALISTS are unique and create their own distinct culture. They experience the highs and lows of life intensely. They take great pride in their aesthetic tastes. Individualists often feel like misplaced children and they long for a sense of real family.

5. INVESTIGATORS believe you must protect yourself from a world that demands too much and gives too little to assure life. They seek self-sufficiency and are non-demanding, thoughtful and unobtrusive, but also can be withholding, detached and overly private.

6. LOYALISTS believe you must gain protection and security in a hazardous world you just can't trust. Consequently, Loyalists are themselves trustworthy, inquisitive, good friends and questioning, but also can be overly doubtful, accusatory and fearful.

7. ENTHUSIASTS are optimistic thrill seekers that see life as an adventure. This constant zest for life can be inspiring. But once things lose their fun, enthusiasts are no longer interested; many projects go unfinished. They fear being overwhelmed by life's struggles.

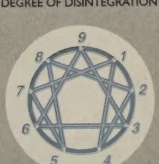
8. CHALLENGERS believe you must be strong and powerful to assure protection and regard in a tough world. Consequently, Challengers seek justice and are direct, strong and action-oriented, but also excessive and sometimes impulsive.

9. PEACEMAKERS are calm, laid-back, and optimistic. They are able to see everyone's point of view and have a natural desire for peace. They are effective mediators, but are fearful of conflict and separation from others. In some cases they can be too accommodating.

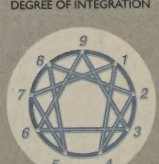
DEGREES OF DISINTEGRATION AND INTEGRATION

The inner lines of the Enneagram connect the types in a sequence that designates what each personality type will do under different conditions. There are two lines connected to each type, and they connect with two other types. One line connects with a type that represents how a person of the first type behaves when they are moving toward health and growth. This is called the Direction of Integration or Growth. The other line goes to another type that represents how the person is likely to act out if they are under increased stress—when they feel they are not in control of the situation. This second line is called the Direction of Stress or Disintegration. In other words, different situations will evoke different kinds of responses from different personality types.

DEGREE OF DISINTEGRATION



DEGREE OF INTEGRATION



To find out your personal enneagram and personality type, go to www.similarminds.com and take the free 30, 84, or 126 question test.

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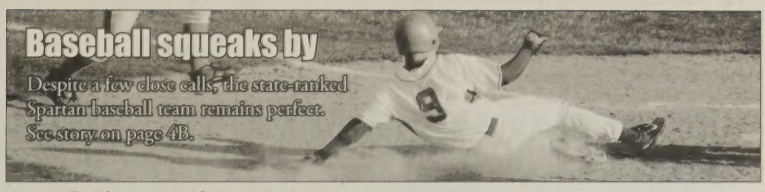
Sports


Baseball squeaks by
Despite a few close calls, the state-ranked Spartan baseball team remains perfect.
See story on page 4B.

Friday, April 18, 2008

Something to *cheer* about

Despite a disappointing loss to rival Huntington North, the softball squad has plenty to get excited about early in the season

By Kalyn Jorgenson
Writer

With the weather ranging from sunshine to thunderstorms, the Lady Spartan's have had to face obstacles. A few games have had to be rescheduled, which has caused the team to be hard at work. This past week the team played six games.

Before spring break, the Lady Spartan's faced Leo in the first game of the season. Although nervous, the team overcame the Lion's with a 16-0 win. Winning pitcher, Jacqui Matheis (11) was ecstatic about the victory.

"It felt really good to pitch a shutout against them. It was nice knowing that my hard work during the off season paid off," Matheis said.

As the baseball team traveled to Tennessee over spring break, the Lady Spartan's were required to attend a mandatory Saturday practice. Many of the girls went on trips that were through churches or other families, so they were not able to choose the day of return. Because of this, seven girls didn't come back to Fort Wayne until that Sunday. Due to the girl's not attending the Saturday practice, they were required to sit out the first two innings of the Bishop Luers game. Since the team did not have enough girls to play, junior varsity players Amanda Stevenson (9), Sam Aguilar (9), and Samantha Harless (10) filled in. The first inning didn't start out as well as the team would have liked. By the end of the inning, Luers had scored eight runs. Although many players were discouraged, they believed the Spartan's had to the ability to come back and win.

"By the end of the first inning we were all kind of upset because we thought the game was going to be really close. Last year when we played them we played sixteen innings and ended in a tie. I think every player did their best but not having our starters kind of put us as a disadvantage because people were playing their secondary positions and weren't as comfortable," Matheis said.

After the second inning of the game all starters were placed in. Aguilar started off the Spartan's hitting streak with a hard hit up the middle of the field. This helped the team's morale and the ladies began to come back. The team ended up winning the game 14-8, with the help of Erica Leeper's (11) first homerun of the season.

"In our game against Luers we had a lot of players who were given the opportunity to hit. It showed how everyone on the team can contribute to our success," Melissa Harber (11) said.

On Monday the Lady Spartan's faced sectional rival, Huntington North. To prepare for the game the team wore all black to school. Huntington North beat the team last year in the sectional tournament, so the ladies were prepared for an intense game. The first four innings of the game went by quickly because there were numerous strike outs. In the fifth inning, the Vikings scored a run when a ball fell short in the outfield. The Spartan's continued to push themselves to win, but fell short in the end. Huntington North ended up winning two to zero.

"I thought we played well. Their pitcher is really good but we made good contact. Although we lost, we are all looking forward to putting this game behind us and beating them in sectionals," Mallory Harber (11) said.

PHOTOS BY SUZIE REECER

Top Left: Junior Varsity Coach Ann Matheis and members of the varsity softball team eagerly wait to congratulate Erica Leeper (11) after her first homerun of the season. Top Right: Nikki Wilson (11) and Becky Price (12) lead the team in celebration after E. Leeper's critical homerun against Bishop Luers. The deep hit allowed the Spartans to build a comfortable lead over a historically even-matched Luers' team. Above: Jacqui Matheis (11) winds up to release a pitch during the home contest against Luers last week.

BRIEFS

INTRAMURAL DODGEBALL

The annual Intramural Dodgeball league at the Jorgensen YMCA will be starting next Wednesday. The first games will be played on April 23 on both basketball courts at 3:00 pm followed by games at 3:45 and 4:30. The twelve competing teams consist of six guys and two girls each, and will play one game per week over the next five weeks, except for the week of May 19-23. Following the regular season, teams will participate in a single elimination tournament. Students can pick up complete schedules from the discipline office today or join the facebook group "Homestead Intramural Dodgeball" for more information.

GIRLS' LACROSSE

The 23 members of the girls' lacrosse team recently traveled to Culver Academy on Wednesday, April 16 for one of their closest games of the season. Homestead has the only girls' lacrosse team in the area, and thus must commute for their contests. The team, which is in only its second year, practices Mondays through Thursdays from 5-7 pm. Two Carroll students, two Canterbury students, and two Woodside students round out the roster that consists of mostly Spartan athletes. The team is coached by Kent Brown, a local lacrosse enthusiast whose son played for Homestead.

SENIOR ATHLETIC AWARDS

Several awards available exclusively to seniors will be granted at the Spring Athletic Awards ceremony during May. Eligible athletes were asked to submit applications last week, and will be evaluated for the awards prior to the banquet. Seniors who earned eight or more varsity letters throughout their careers will receive personalized blue and gold blankets. One male and one female athlete will receive the McCracken Camps Outstanding Senior Athlete Award, which is based on overall contribution to the athletic program at Homestead. In addition, the Williams Award will be presented to a multi-sport athlete who best exemplifies that qualities of sportsmanship, leadership, citizenship, and role modeling for the underclass athletes.

ALL-NORTHEAST INDIANA HONOR

Jena Hamrick (9), Kendra Dyson (10) and Jacob Weide (12) were deemed Honorable Mention candidates for the All-Northeast Indiana Womens' and Mens' Basketball Teams, respectively.

DANCE TEAM TRYOUTS

Any girls interested in trying out for the Varsity, JV or Hip Hop dance team for the 2008-2009 school year must attend a mandatory meeting on Monday, Apr. 21st at 6:30 pm. The meeting will cover the basic expectations of the team and parents should plan to accompany their dancer to the meeting. The routine performed at auditions will be taught on Friday, Apr. 25th. There will be workshops on the following Monday and Tuesday to practice the routine before tryouts are held from 5-9 p.m. on Wednesday, Apr. 30th. Those interested can see Leah Stupeck in the dance room with any additional questions.

COLLEGE-BOUND ATHLETES

Any senior athlete who has signed a letter of committment to participate at the college or university level should check in with the athletic office before April 22.

Girls' tennis starts regular season strong at 2-0

By Suzie Reecer
Photographer

After weeks of practice and a week of spring break the girls' tennis team began their competition season last Tuesday. The Snider Panthers visited Homestead 0-0, and left 0-1. The Spartans used their home court advantage to sweep the match 5-0 with wins in each category of play.

One doubles, Tiffany Schendel (11) and Theresa Sciole (11), defeated Snider's experienced senior duo of Mary and Hannah Roy 7-6 (7-1), 6-7 (4-7), 6-3 in a grueling match. Prior to their faceoff on Tuesday, Schendel and Sciole knew they would have a difficult match in the Panther partners

The team then traveled to New Haven on Tuesday, Apr. 17, and followed their initial victory with another 5-0 win.

"We've had some pretty easy matches so far, but the real challenge will be this weekend," three singles players Sarah Antrobus (12) said.

Tomorrow, the team will leave for Carmel to play in the Carmel Invitational Tournament. The CIT is a tournament with many of the best teams in the state in attendence, including the defending state champions Park Tudor, as well as powerhouse programs North Central Indianapolis, Munster, Jasper and Carmel, among others. The girls hope to match or improve their third place performance in last years' CIT.

As can be expected in any athletic contest in which the best of the best meet up in order to compete, there will be many great match-ups throughout the day. One of the most anticipated matches of the day will be the between junior sensations Jade Johnson (11) and Mary Hill from Munster High School. Johnson will take the court seeking revenge from last year's loss and is looking forward to the match.

"It is going to be a tough match like it always is, but hopefully this time the outcome will be in my favor," Johnson said.

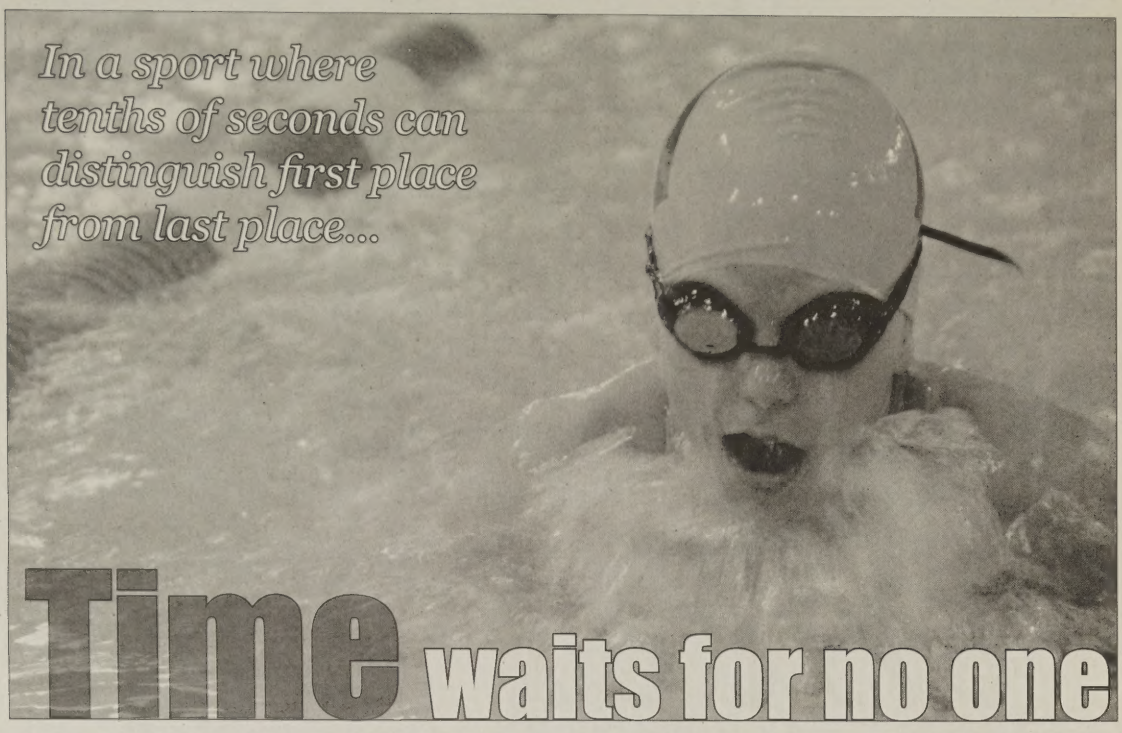
Next Saturday, the Spartans will be playing in an invitational at Concord High School. First place was awarded to Homestead at the invitational last season. One of the highlights of the upcoming Concord Invitational is that it is the only time the team meets local rival Canterbury before sectional play commences.

"Playing Canterbury at Concord will give us a heads up for when we play them in sectionals. Last year was a really close match, and I'm guessing this year will be the same way," Schendel said.

The complete lineup for the Spartans has been Johnson playing one singles, Suzie Reecer (10) at two singles, Antrobus at three singles, Schendel and Sciole at one doubles and Kate Bienz (11) with either Megan Miller (12) or Claire Lundergan (11) at two doubles.

PHOTO BY SUZIE REECER

Megan Miller (12), Kate Bienz (11), Suzie Reecer (10), Jade Johnson (11), Sarah Antrobus (11), Tiffany Schendel (11), Theresa Sciole (11)



Time waits for no one

By Yogesh Jonna
Writer

Every second counted when Tori Bagan (9) qualified for the US Olympic Team Trials through the Speedo Championship Series in Indianapolis. Over the summer Bagan will go to Omaha to participate in the US Olympic team trials.

The Olympic Games are more than just sports games they are battles between countries. Although Bagan still has a lot of competition to go through before for making the team, it is a mere spectacular feat to be where she is now.

"I was not really surprised because I knew I was going for it," Bagan said. "I wasn't so shocked but I was happy I got it, and my parents were really really excited for me."

One of the most captivating aspects of her success is who she has faced to be where she is now. As a freshman, Tori Bagan is only 15 years old but she has been competing against seniors who have had years of experience at the state swimming competition. At the Speedo competition, Bagan defeated one of her opponent from the state competition which allowed her to qualify for the Olympic trials. At the state finals for the 100 breast stroke, Bagan took third behind Lindsay Rogers. At the Speedo competition, Bagan was able to take second place ahead of Lindsay Rogers.

"I had to travel to Indianapolis two weeks ago, and I had to compete against a lot of the state swimmers," Bagan said. "I had to qualify by getting a time and I got it."

Bagan needed 1 minute 12.59 seconds to qualify and she placed second with a 1 minute 11.62 seconds. Like all the other qualifiers across United States, Bagan must train for the trials in June. However, she relies on her coach for that part of her swimming.

> *"I was not really surprised because I knew I was going for [a qualifying time]... but I was happy I got it."*
>
> **Tori Bagan (9)**
> Swimmer

Like most successful athletes, Bagan started swimming at a very early age. However, she was influenced by others to get involved in competitive swimming and to be where she is now.

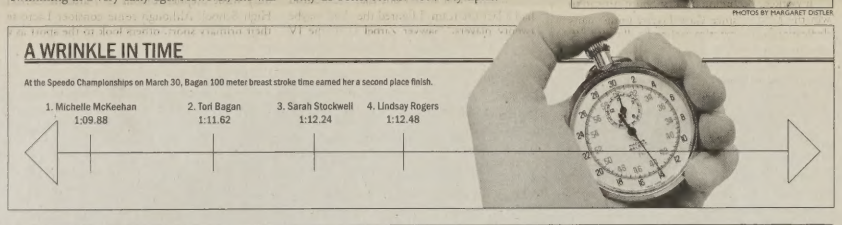
"I tried a lot of different sports, but my friend Molly Page, she goes to Snider, she was swimmer," Bagan said. "She pretty much got me into it."

As a freshman in high school, Bagan's only experience compared to others is one year of state swimming finals. Bagan was very successful at this year's state competition placing in the top five in two individual events as well as being a part of two relay teams that also placed in the top five. Besides competing at the state finals, her experience as part of a team helped her improve.

"It really helped me a lot because it was so exciting and so much fun," Bagan said. "I really enjoyed it and I had so much fun with everyone on the team."

This year it is uncertain to many how Bagan will do at the Olympic team trials. Nonetheless, she can only improve over the next four years and only do better for the 2012 Olympics.

PHOTOS BY MARGARET DISTLER


A WRINKLE IN TIME
At the Speedo Championships on March 30, Bagan 100 meter breast stroke time earned her a second place finish.
1. Michelle McKeehan 1:09.88
2. Tori Bagan 1:11.62
3. Sarah Stockwell 1:12.24
4. Lindsay Rogers 1:12.48

Track squads rely on X-factor atheletes

Boys remain undefeated, girls face early loss

PHOTO BY MARGARET DISTLER

By Mat Mikesell
Writer

As they expected, the boys track team is cruising through their opponents, leaving them in the dust. Winning their past meet against East Noble and Bellmont, the Spartans improved their record and the team's quest for a perfect season is still intact.

The sprinters and long distance runners have stepped up and have led the team through its early season. Senior leadership has also directed the team. Along with the individual members, mother nature has also been good to the team, allowing them to have decent weather on the days of their three outdoor meets.

Against Columbia City, the Spartans rolled easily through the Eagles, beating them 88-50. The sprinters and long distance runners shined in their events. Along with the individual runners, the 4x1 and 4x8 teams also claimed first in their respected events.

"We are undefeated so far which is a good thing," Coach Shenfeld said. "We still have a long way to go before our conference meet next month."

Andy Alvarez (12) and Ross Heckber (12) won in the 110 meter hurdles and 310 meter hurdles, respectively. Another sprinter, Dan Haught (11) placed first in the 100 meter dash while Kyle Beutler (11) won his event of the 800 meter run.

"A few people who have really come on that really have surprised me the most are Philip O'Brien (10) and David Meza (10)," Shenfeld said.

Both O'Brien and Meza compete in the pole vault, which took a hit after Hunter Hall ('07) graduated last year. All the other members who were supposed to perform well are doing as expected.

The Spartans' quest for a perfect season continues when the team competes in the Harding Relays this weekend. Though not considered a regular meet, the relays will be the Spartans biggest test of the young season, with 16 Indiana schools participating.

The girls' team has hit an early season road bump, losing to the Eagles Wednesday, Apr. 9, 51-81. In a lopsided meet, Terrayshya Gordon (10) shined in her events, winning the 100 and 200 meter dash and leading her 4x1 team to victory.

Whitney Washington (11), who has be rumored to find practice irrelevant in comparison to the meets, disproved of the claim.

"The first two weeks of the season I could not run because I did not have my physical," Washington said. "You will not get better unless you practice."

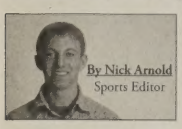
The girls team does have some work to do while plenty of time left. First-year coach Amy Barnes has the team staying positive for the rest of the season.

"She gives us good workouts and shows us what we need to do," Washington said. "But there are still things she is learning and things we are learning about her."

PHOTO BY ZACH HESSLER

Above: Carolyn Mutton (10) paces herself with Columbia City opponent Haley Richter (10). Left: Terrayshya Gordon (10) inches by a competing runner to win the 100 meter dash.

PGA golf tourney has 'master' appeal



By Nick Arnold
Sports Editor

As the 20 mile an hour winds and sleet lashed across the Midwest, a familiar realization came to mind: spring break had once again arrived.

Spring break brings with it the real promise of spring, particularly in the advent of spring sports. Major League Baseball teams debut their marathon seasons, many outdoor high school sports teams begin to compete, and cameras broadcast from the hills of Augusta in one of the most premier events in all of sports - The Masters.

Only a select few athletic competitions can claim the prestige and tradition that is entrenched in the Masters, held at Augusta National Golf Club. Lined with dense Georgia forestry and lush vegetation, Augusta exemplifies the beauty of spring to even the most unfamiliar viewer of the Masters. Azaleas are in full bloom, the green fairways are manicured to impeccable standards, and streams carve gently through the course.

Yet, many fans will quickly point out what makes Augusta so strange. The club is ultra-conservative and shrouded in secrecy. Hootie Johnson, its former chairman, was criticized for continuing the club's policy of barring women from membership privileges.

Only a select group of individuals are allowed to walk the hallowed grounds of Augusta, and their credentials include CEO's and former Masters Champions. Augusta is the pinnacle of privacy, and many times even the media is left to wonder about decisions of the club's governing body.

Although its secrecy may frustrate many, it also is what makes Augusta so unique. We love to watch the Masters because we know how private and lucky the players and fans are, walking the slopes of the world's most famous course. The Masters attracts viewers from all around the world, all hoping to capture the splendor of such an immaculate event.

While golf's other three majors are certainly prestigious, ask any professional golfer if they would rather hoist a trophy or don the green jacket, and they will be inclined to express a need for one piece of apparel. No other tournament captivates players and fans in such a fashion as this.

As Tiger Woods faltered and Augusta gritted its teeth at players on the final nine Sunday, one stood apart. Trevor Immelman, a young South African, mastered 2008's Augusta to don the green jacket. After surviving a benign tumor and losing 20 pounds from a parasite, Immelman came to Augusta with a new perspective on life and the game of golf.

It worked. Becoming the first South African to win the Masters since Gary Player, Immelman's dedication to his practice regime finally paid off. Though Player was not present during the final round, he was assuredly proud of his young countryman's performance.

So when the Indiana climate continues to puzzle and disappoint, the dependable images of Augusta instill in us an optimistic view of nature. The flowering backdrop of the world's most grand golf event remind us that change does exist, and will eventually find its way to those who need it most.

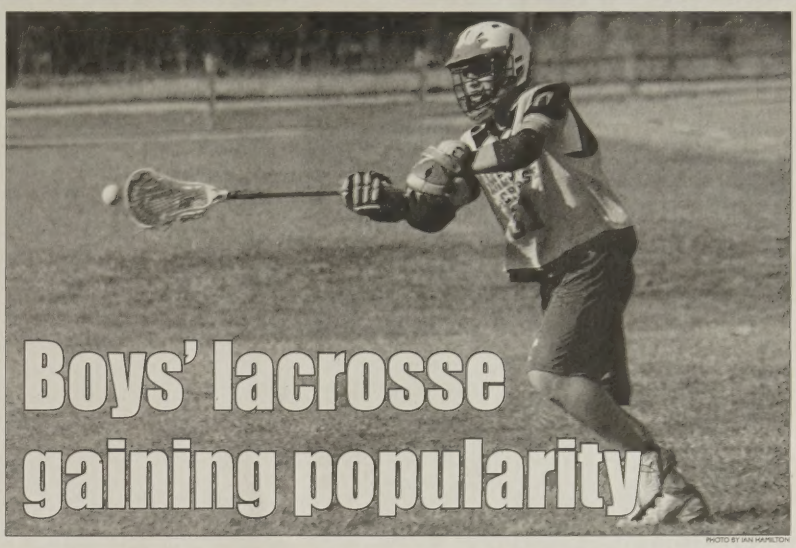


PHOTO BY IAN HAMILTON

Trevor Davis (11) passes the ball to an open teammate during a drill. The team practices on the fields behind the Aboite Fire Station no matter what the weather.

Boys' lacrosse gaining popularity

By Andrew Weiss
Writer

If one was to stroll through the hallways on the days of athletic events, chances are that most people would be heard talking about baseball, track and field or golf. However, some sports are forgotten among the common students, like lacrosse, a club sport. While it has not always got much attention, the sport pushes on as participation increases each year in this unique game.

Most sports have no trouble finding people to join their teams. Sports like softball and tennis put out announcements a few weeks in advance of the season and receive an influx of potential team members. Lacrosse, on the other hand, puts out tryout information in August, even though the season starts in March, to assure that there will be enough players participating. This year, 17 freshmen, 17 sophomores, 18 juniors and four seniors are participating. The JV team has 21 members while the Varsity has 27 members.

"When I first found out that Homestead had a lacrosse team, I figured they had maybe twenty players," Sawyer Zirbel (10), the JV team captain, said. "I had no clue we would have this many people playing."

Beginning in 2005, lacrosse joined Homestead's lineup of club sports that now include hockey, bowling, rugby and men's volleyball. However, like these other sports, the lacrosse team does not consider themselves a club sport; they feel they deserve the same respect and coverage as the other varsity sports.

"We really do not think that we are just a club sport," Noah Gayer (10) said. "We practice everyday and play on the Homestead fields just like other varsity sports."

Despite the difficulty in getting word out about the club, Homestead once again had enough players to create both a JV and Varsity team this year. In order to try to get current freshmen and other young Spartans interested in playing Lacrosse, the team recruited during school orientation. With so many underclassmen playing, the team will look to continue sparking interest in this sport.

Because lacrosse is considered a club sport, the team is able to bring in players from area high schools to play for the team. Currently, three of the 55 total players come from area schools: Craig Wright (12) and Jake Wilson (10) attend Canterbury while Stephen Bloom (10) attends Carroll High School. Although some consider Lacrosse their primary sport, others look to the sport as a means of staying in shape for sports played during the fall and winter months.

"I originally started playing because I thought it would be a fun way to stay in shape for hockey," Josh Berger (9) said. "[Now] I do not look at it that way because I like playing [lacrosse] a great deal."

For those who consider lacrosse their primary sport, they must practice and train year-round for the season.

"I started playing to give me something to do after school and stay in shape, but I got hooked once I started playing last year," Ryley Myers (10) said.

Homestead is just one of three area teams to have lacrosse as a club sport, as Bishop Luers and Snider both have Varsity and JV teams. Due to the lack of schools with teams, both teams at Homestead must travel around Indiana to play games. In the Indiana North division, the closest team outside of Fort Wayne is Concord, which is 44 minutes away. This year, there are 28 schools with at least a varsity lacrosse club team around the state.

"I don't see the travel as an issue," Jim Finley (9) said. "The team consists of a great group of guys. Although the trips are long, it is fun to be in the car with some of my teammates."

On Mar. 15, both teams played their first games, with Varsity beating the Concord Minutemen 13-0.

"The Concord game gave us some much needed time to practice plays against another defense," Myers said.

The team's next game came against Laporte, where they lost a tight game 4-2. With their record at 1-1, the team headed down south for a double header against Bishop Chatard and North Central on Saturday, Apr. 12. Their first home game is tomorrow against Brebeuf Prep. With the bulk of the schedule coming up quickly, the lacrosse team is looking for the success they have wanted. More importantly, they will be looking for the respect and support they need from their fellow students.

> *"We really do not think that we are just a club sport. We practice every day and play on the Homestead fields, just like other varsity sports."*
>
> **Noah Gayer (10)**
> Lacrosse Player

Boys' golf team thwarted by weather in early season

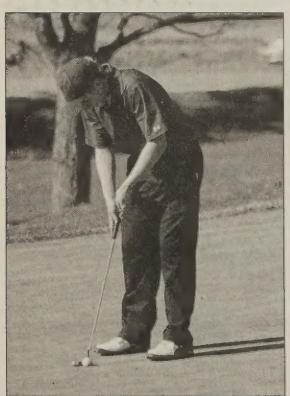


PHOTO BY IAN HAMILTON

John Finley (9) lines up his putt on Orchard Ridge green.

By Andrew Weiss
Writer

Last year, the boys' golf team was able to stop every team's run to the state championship from April to June, but this year the one opponent that the team cannot defeat is Mother Nature.

The team has four of five golfers returning for this season's hopeful return to a regional. Al Jennings (10), Grant Sawyers (11), Matt Wilson (12), Michael Mercier (12) and Nick Arnold (12) all represent returning varsity members to the team. The only varsity golfer that was lost due to graduation was Erich Johnston ('07), arguably last year's top golfer. Johnston shot a team best, four under 68 at the team's sectional at Noble Hawk Golf Course. Johnston's was also the lowest score out of all the 80 golfers competing in the sectional.

"We all are going to miss [Johnston] and what he brought to the team," Jennings said. "I think we'll do him proud by winning state this year."

Despite having just one senior, the team won their sectional for the second year in a row. Overall, the boys' golf team has won a total of eight sectionals all-time, and the team had never won a regional until last year. Before last season, the team had never finished in the top three of a regional, and last year they won the regional by a whopping 21 strokes.

"[Playing in state] will give use a lot of confidence this year considering how much we beat the other teams before state," Mercier said. "Hopefully we can get back this year."

Homestead was ranked a Fort Wayne best as 12th overall in Indiana, according to the Indiana High School Golf Association's Preseason Poll. State tournament winner Floyd Central was left off the top 20 on the preseason poll.

"Playing at Orchard [Ridge] gives us a great advantage because it is a tougher course so when teams come to play in our Invitationals they tend to struggle," Matt Wilson (12) said.

Due to the wet weather, golf courses could not open at their expected date making it harder for players to practice before tryouts.

"Most of the returning varsity players had been practicing indoors at the Dome leading up to try outs, we have worked hard this off season to win state, we are ready to get started," Jennings said.

Tryout dates were pushed back three weeks because of the weather and at the same time, matches did not move correspondingly. The team had only two days to prepare for their first match against Concordia.

"I was used to playing in matches so I was somewhat prepared heading into our first match," Wilson said.

Although the team had little time to practice, the boy's team rolled in their first match at Orchard Ridge Country Club. Homestead defeated Concordia 155 to 229.

"Considering we only had two practices on the course, I think we did alright," Mercier said.

Homestead was led by the swing of Mercier who shot a match low of 36. Jennings scored second with a 39, while Wilson shot 40. Sawyers and Arnold both shot 42.

A day after the Concordia match, the poor weather stuck the golf courses yet again, causing their second match and first conference match against DeKalb to be cancelled.

Playing in the freezing rain, the team finished third last weekend at the Warsaw Invitational. Like the years past, the weather presented a definite obstacle for the players. With the upcoming Spring Preview and The Legends, the annual tournament that mirrors state in competition, the team is planning on lower scores and higher temperatures.

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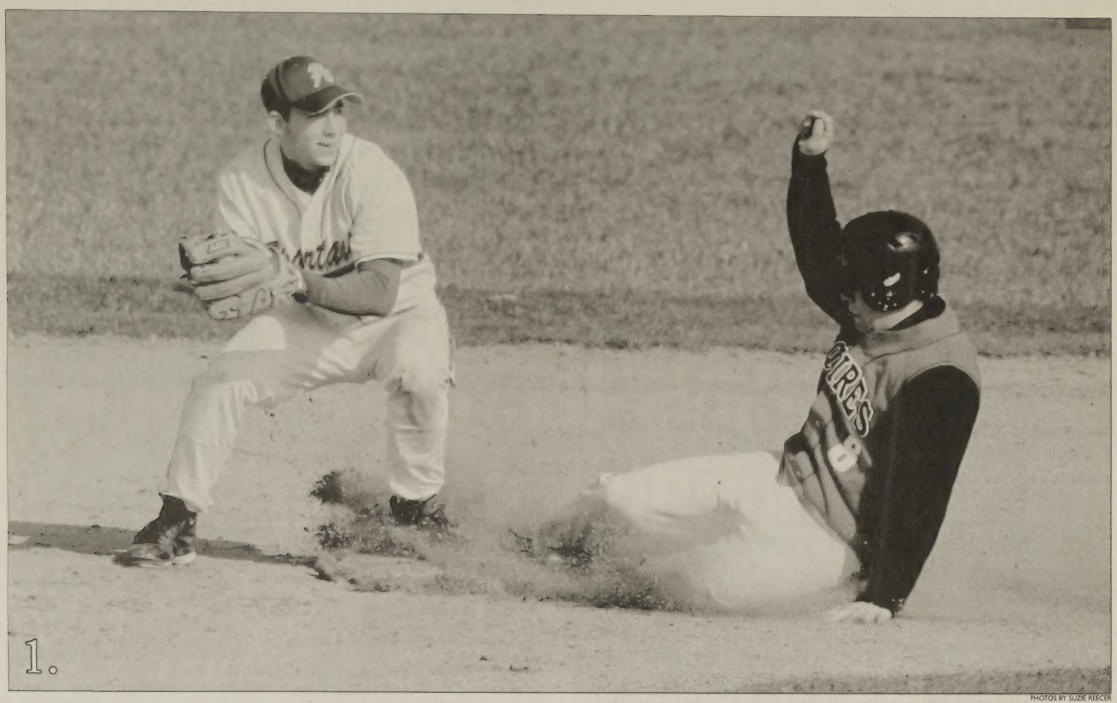
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PHOTOS BY SUZIE KEECH

fielding their *dreams*

Baseball team bonds over Tennessee trip, ready to continue winning streak

By Kara Busse
Writer

As most of us were heading to Florida or Cancun for the week, the varsity baseball team set off for Tennessee during spring break to practice and play games away from home.

"Spring break was good for the team because we got in a couple of good games and practices in the warm weather," Zach Stine (11) said.

Instead of lying out on the beach or swimming in the ocean, the team's schedule was very full. In the morning the boys had a team breakfast followed by a 10:00 a.m. practice lasting two to three hours. They then ate lunch together, and either had another demanding practice or game, depending on the day.

"We made some good bonds while we were down in Tennessee," Chris Jorgensen (12) said.

The only true free-time the guys had was between the second practice and lights-out.

"We were able to get dinner and do stuff on our own as long as we were in by 10:30 p.m.," Stein said.

The first team the boys played on their trip was a struggle to compete with, as they came out with a 1-11 loss.

During the last game in Tennessee, the varsity team came back with a little more bounce in their step, and they were a little more prepared than previously.

"We knew what we needed to focus on because of how we played in the first game," Jorgensen said.

Because of their experience in the first game, the team beat Marryville High School, and left Tennessee with a win under their belts.

The boys came home to play the Bishop Dwenger Saints on Tuesday, Apr. 8. Although they were not on their home field, the game proved to be fairly easy for the team.

"We played really well as a team [against Dwenger]," Stine said.

While they had a few errors here and there leading to the opponents scoring three runs, the boys thumped Bishop Dwenger 9-3, securing another win for their record.

The next game the varsity boys played, following a few rainouts, was against Manchester High School on Wednesday, Apr. 9. The game wasn't nearly as easy a win compared to the previous game against the Saints. They struggled up until the sixth inning.

"I think we came out against Manchester a little flat," Stine said. "We expected an easy win."

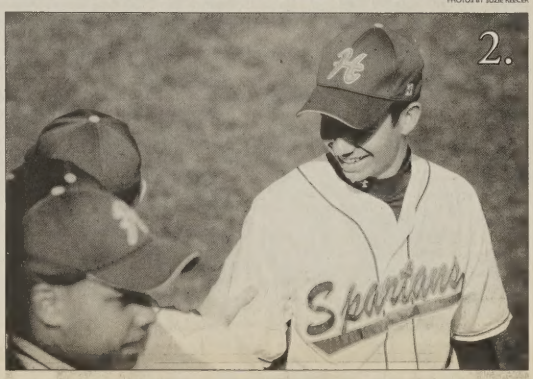
The guys never gave up, as they continued to play, and the game ended in their favor, for a win of 7-6, almost too close for comfort.

"We were able to stay in it and get a big inning in the sixth and come out with the win," Glover said.

The boy's current record is 4-0 and the team is hoping to keep it looking nice.

"We really want to live up to last year's standards," Jorgensen said.

With a new coach, different leaders and players and an overall strong team, the group of varsity baseball players this year should not find any trouble trying to adjust and maintain their reputation as a tough, competitive set.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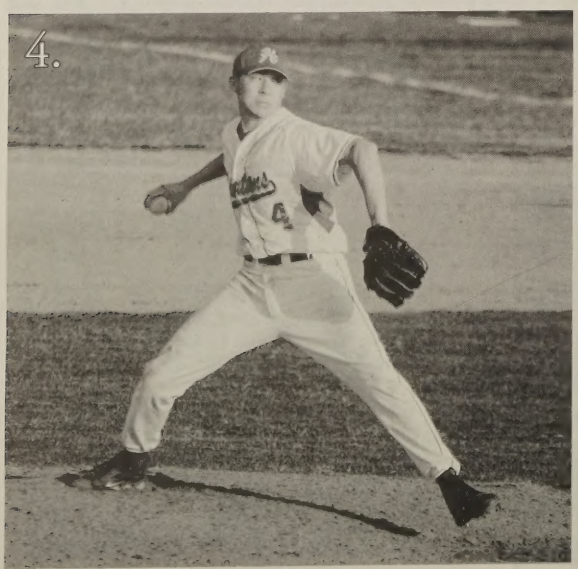
1. Ryan Trieglaff (12) begins the execution of a double play after out touching a rival during a home game against the Manchester Squires.
2. Bob Glover (12) smiles before heading into the dugout after fielding an inning.
3. Ryan Wright (12) slides feet first into home plate just in time to score a run. The team won the game against Manchester 7-6
4. Derek Kinzer (11) winds up to throw a fastball. Kinzer is one of the team's pitchers.

The team's next home game is tomorrow. They will be playing a double header against Northrop. The first game starts at 10 a.m.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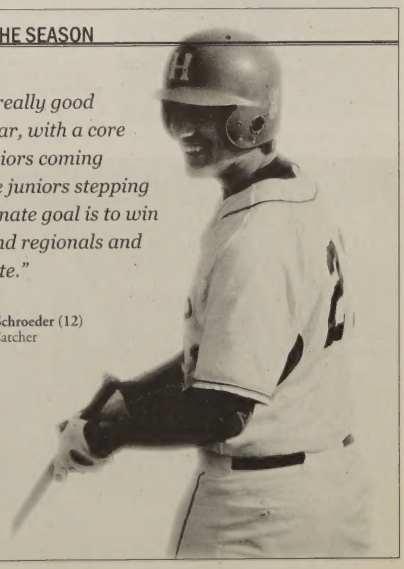
HOPES FOR THE SEASON

"We have a really good team this year, with a core group of seniors coming back and the juniors stepping up. Our ultimate goal is to win sectionals and regionals and then win state."

Doug Schroeder (12)
Catcher